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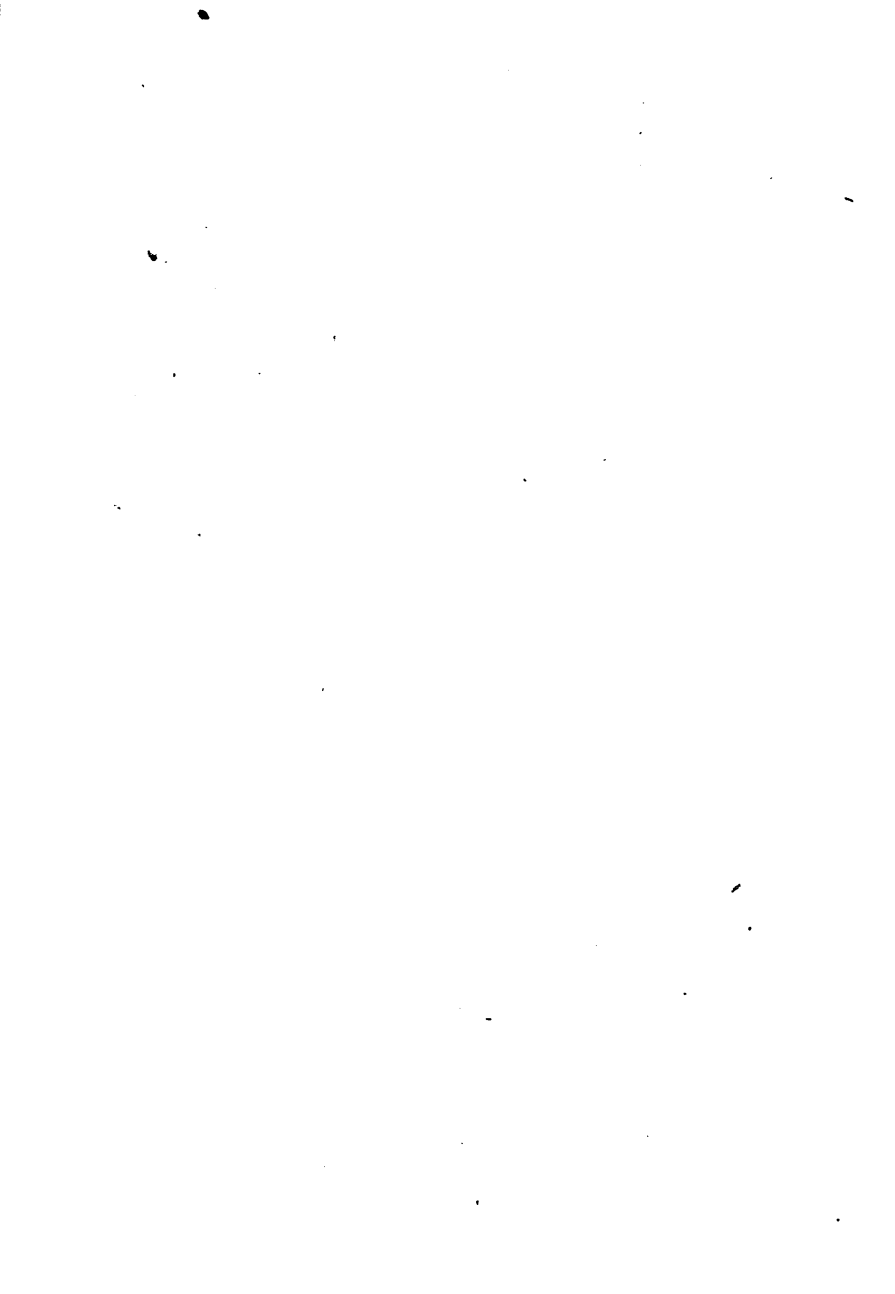
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EVERYCHILD'S SERIES

NATURE STORIES

BY

MARY GARDNER

OF THE DULUTH, MINNESOTA, PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

ETHEL BLOSSOM AND HELEN BABBITT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1913

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Set up and electrotyped. Published May, 1912. Reprinted
January, 1913.

Norwood Press

J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

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NATURE STORIES



THE SUNFLOWER

We brought a sunflower to school today.

It was the tallest sunflower in our garden.

It was taller than our teacher.

Father plants sunflowers every year for the seeds.

When the seeds are ripe, we feed them to the chickens.

This great yellow flower looks like a face.

The strong, straight stalk is like a body.

The large, broad leaves are the prettiest of green gowns.

This yellow-haired lady cannot walk about.

Her roots hold her fast in the ground.

But she can turn her flower head.

She does turn it to watch the sun on his way.

In the morning the sunflower looks toward the east.

She wishes to watch the sun rise.

At night she turns her bright face toward the west.

She likes to watch him as long as she can.

Long ago the sunflower was a beautiful fairy called Clytie.

Then she lived in a cave at the bottom of the sea.

Clytie had carpets of moss in her cave home.

She had chairs of coral.

Her carriage was a shell.

Goldfish were her horses and drew her carriage

One day she drove to the top of the water.

There she sat upon the shore a long time.

There Clytie saw the sun for the first time.

She loved to watch him.

So Clytie came to the top of the water every day.

There she sat upon the shore.

One evening the sun had gone, so Clytie started to go home.

But she could not move an inch.
Her feet had changed to roots.
They held her fast in the ground.
Her beautiful face was changed to
the sunflower we know now.

Her slender body was changed to
the strong, straight stalk that grows
so tall.

Who had done all this to Clytie ?

The sun himself had done it.

The sun thought Clytie was so
beautiful.

He knew, too, that Clytie loved to
watch him.

Now she could watch him always.

For Clytie never went back to her
cave home at the bottom of the sea.

THE GOLDENROD

Helen has been for a long drive with her father.

Helen's father is a doctor.

She found this yellow flower growing along the side of the road.

See what a great bunch she gathered to bring home to us!

Don't you wish you could have as beautiful a dress as this sunny flower wears?

No one but fairies from Fairyland could have made that dress.

Tom thinks the flower must have been down in a gold mine.

It does look as if it were covered with bright and shining gold.

Mother says tiny stars must have

fallen down some night and covered it.

Goldenrod is dressed in the sunshine of the brightest day in summer.

Whenever we look at it, it gives us back the sunshine of that happy day.

How straight and tall the goldenrod always grows.

Perhaps it hears some one in the sky calling to it.

It may be standing on tip-toe to answer.

The goldenrod does not begin to blossom until summer is almost over.

God bids it wait until nearly all the other flowers have gone.

Patient little goldenrod!

You teach us many things.

You teach us to be cheerful and sunny-hearted.



You show us how to be patient, too.

You wait patiently while all the other flowers bloom.

The goldenrod has just the shape of the tall elm tree.

One night tiny fairies were dancing under a tall elm tree.

They wished they had some smaller trees of their own.

Their queen heard them and smiled.

Then she waved her magic wand.

Over each fairy sprang up the first goldenrod that ever grew.

The goldenrod is the fairies' elm tree.

PURPLE ASTERS

Goldenrod never blooms alone by the roadside.

She has a dear flower friend, whose blossoms look like stars.

Where you find one, you will always find the other.

This star flower is called a purple aster.

It was not always a flower.

Long ago it was a little girl with blue eyes.

This little blue-eyed girl once visited an old fairy.

This old fairy lived at the top of a long hill.

The little girl climbed the long, steep hill to ask the fairy a question.

She wanted to know how to make everybody happy.

The old fairy changed her into this flower.

The little blue-eyed girl was never seen again.

And before Blue Eyes climbed the hill no one had ever seen this star-flower by the roadside.

So Blue Eyes had her wish.

She is making everybody happy.

Everybody is glad to see this bright, pretty blossom in the fall.

Another story says the flower is a lady in a purple gown.

The Goldenrod is a gay gentleman with yellow hair.

Once they had a coach and a pair of prancing horses.

They lost their coach and prancing horses long ago.

They do not seem to miss their coach and horses, for they have so many good friends.

The prickly thistle is one of the comrades they like.

The dusty milkweed is another good friend.

The lady in the purple gown and the gentleman with the yellow hair call themselves "Autumn's Children."

THE CORN

We had a hard drawing lesson today.

We tried to draw a cornstalk that Tom brought to school.

We made some good pictures of it, too.

I like to see cornfields when I am riding in the cars.

When the wind blows, the tall, straight stocks bend and bow.

Once when I was at Grandpa's, I walked through his cornfield.

There was a gentle wind blowing that day.

It sounded as if the cornstalks were whispering to each other.

Perhaps they were telling each other all their secrets.

Long ago the Indians showed the white men how to make corn grow.

The Indians buried a dead fish in every hill of corn.

That made the earth richer.

The stalk has joints, but not at all like our joints.

Each one of the leaves come from a joint.

Each leaf wraps itself about the stem as far as the next joint.

Don't you suppose some of the big fairies use these long leaves for sashes ?

They look so much like narrow green ribbons.

The prettiest part of the corn is the tassel.

The tassel is the blossom of the corn.

But the part we like best is the ear.

That gives us corn to pop in the winter time.

Did you ever feel anything as soft as the silk that is around the ear?

Sometimes farmers' boys and girls have great fun husking the corn in the barn.

We have all seen mats for the floor made of husks.

Even the cobs are good for something to the farmer.

He uses them for fuel.

The Indians believe that corn was given to them by the Great Spirit.

Once a magician wrestled in the forest with a very small man.

The tiny man wore a red feather on his head.

As soon as the magician threw him to the ground, the little man with the red feather was gone.

He was nowhere to be seen.

A crooked ear of corn with a red tassel grew where he had fallen.

The magician stripped off the husk.



Then he scattered the kernels all over the ground.

In a month he came back to the same place.

He found the ground covered with long blades of corn.

He told no one what he had done, until summer was over.

Then he went to this same place again.

This time the ears of corn were ripe.

So he gathered some of the finest ears and took them to all his friends.

The body of the small man with the red feather has given us food ever since the magician fought him in the forest.

THE PUMPKIN

We can hardly wait for tomorrow to come.

Tomorrow is Hallowe'en.

Then we will try all the Hallowe'en tricks Miss Maud taught us.

We will bob for apples in Mother's big dish pan, full of water.

We will hang an apple in the doorway and try our best to take a bite.

The girls will pare some apples.

They will swing the long strips of peel round their heads three times.

Then they will drop it and run to see what letter it has made.

But the best fun for the boys is with the jack o' lanterns which we make out of pumpkins.

Some boys take the largest pumpkins they can get.

I think it is easier to run from house to house with the little pumpkins.

Boys like pumpkins, for pies are

made from them as well as jack-o'-lanterns.

I remember how dry and white and old the seed looked which father planted last spring.

It seemed like a fairy seed.

But soon a vine sprang up, covered with flowers of gold.

The corn and pumpkin must be great friends.

They must be as great friends as goldenrod and asters.

Where you find one, you will always find the other.

Did you ever eat squash pie ?

Perhaps you have and did not know it.

Squash pie and pumpkin pie taste very much alike.

How good the muskmelon and the watermelon taste on hot days.

Did you know that they belong to the pumpkin family ?

Many vines grow up on the sides of houses or barns.

Do you think we could make the pumpkin vine grow up the side of the house ?

As soon as the pumpkins grew the least bit heavy, they would pull the vine down.

The pumpkin is one of the largest seed boxes in the world.

How safely it holds its dozens of flat white seeds !

Nothing but breaking the pumpkin open will set the seeds free.

You will laugh when I tell you what I saw made of pumpkin seeds.

It was a rooster, and a very good rooster, too.



An old lady who brought us fresh eggs made it for me.

The pumpkin must have made a handsome golden coach for Cinderella.

How fast those sleek, fat rats must have whirled Cinderella away to the ball!

Hurrah for the golden pumpkin, so
yellow and plump and fine !

Hurrah for the pumpkin pie !



THE CATERPILLAR

Many plants and animals work so hard all summer that they must rest when fall comes.

The tired little caterpillars make their own soft cradles before they go to sleep.

Then they curl up snugly in their little nests.

Miss Maud calls this little nest a cocoon.

This dusty, gray cocoon is made of yards and yards of silk which the caterpillar spun.

The caterpillars have a hard time to keep out of the way of the birds.

The birds eat hundreds of them.

There are a few caterpillars who wear fur coats.

These caterpillars are not afraid of the birds, for the birds do not like them.

I wonder if the caterpillar knows that he will be a butterfly some day.

He must find it hard to creep upon the ground, if he does not know that he will be a butterfly some day.

It must be hard never to fly or walk or run.

How do you suppose the caterpillar feels when he hears the children call him "an ugly old thing"?

He must think it is very foolish for grown-up people to scream when he comes near.

I wonder if the caterpillar knows that his mother was a beautiful butterfly.

Poor little mother butterfly!

She died as soon as she had laid her eggs.

This caterpillar was hatched from one of those eggs.

How queer it would be to see a chicken eat its own shell.

But that is what our caterpillar eats for his first meal. He eats his own cocoon.

Haven't you seen leaves that were full of little holes?

Those holes were where the caterpillar had been eating some of his meals.

Sometimes your mother finds her furs dropping to pieces.

Those furs have given the caterpillar many a feast.

Is this dusty, gray cocoon worth keeping?

It looks as if it were dead.

Miss Maud says, "Put it away in some safe place.

"Then we shall see a wonderful sight early next spring."

If anything wonderful does happen, I'll remember to tell you all about it.

THE WATER DROP

Miss Maud showed us something wonderful to-day through her magic glass.

We did not know what we had been looking at, until afterwards.

Miss Maud asked us what we had seen.

We told her "a whole plateful of little wrigglers."

One boy thought they were something like pollywogs.

But they were even queerer looking than that.

They were not like anything we had ever seen before.

They were the oddest creatures you ever saw.

How they did squirm and wriggle and twist.

“What *are* they, Miss Maud?” we asked.

“What did you put under your magic glass before you let us look?”

“I shall have to tell you,” said Miss Maud, “for you would never guess.

“All I had under my glass was one drop of water from the ditch.”

We all opened our eyes very wide when we heard this.

“I am going to tell you a story about a man.

“This man spent much of his time looking through a magic glass like mine.

“You will laugh when I tell you what the neighbors called him, Cribbley Crabbley !

“Just the sound of his name makes you think of things that creep and crawl.

“One day Cribbley Crabbley sat looking at a drop of ditch water.

“He was looking at it through his glass, just as you have done.

“For a long time he watched the thousands of little creatures.

“They were scrambling and jumping and swarming about.

“Cribbley Crabbley thought it was very dreadful that they could not keep still one minute and let one another alone.

“He thought there must be some way to make them all live together in peace.

“‘Each little squirmer,’ said Cribbley Crabbley to himself, ‘must be made to attend to his own business.

“‘He must be made to let his neighbor alone.’

“He thought and thought how he could do this.

“At last he decided that he must use some magic that he knew.

“First, he poured something that looked like a drop of blood upon the drop of water.

“At once all the little wrigglers turned as red as fire.

“They looked like a whole tribe of Indians with their war paint on.

“Just after Cribbley Crabbley had turned the little creatures red, an old man came in to visit him.

“I do not know the old man’s name.

“‘Why! Why!’ said Cribbley Crabbley’s friend, looking over his shoulder.

“‘What is this you have?’

“‘Find out what it is,’ said Cribbley Crabbley.

“‘You shall have it if you can.

“‘But that will not be so easy to do, I can tell you.’

“Cribbley Crabbley let his friend look through the glass.

“ *His* eyes did not see any Indians with their war paint on.

“ The little wrigglers looked like people to him.

“ These little people seemed to be running about the streets of a town in the wildest way.

“ They acted like crazy folk.

“ Some were on top and some were underneath.

“ But all were kicking and struggling in a most dreadful way.

“ Those underneath tried to push up to the top.

“ Those on top tried to dive down to the bottom.

“ That seemed stranger still.

“ Everybody was always bumping everybody else's head.

“You wondered what kept their heads from cracking.

“Cribbley Crabbley’s friend watched these queer people through the glass for a long time.

“He laughed until he shook all over at the queer things they did.

“‘It is very funny,’ he said at last, wiping his eyes.

“‘But you haven’t told me what you think,’ said Cribbley Crabbley.

“‘I promised this to you, if you could find out what it is.’

“‘It is easy enough to guess,’ said his friend.

“‘And what do you guess it is?’ asked Cribbley Crabbley.

“‘Oh, it is surely some large city.

“ ‘It can be nothing else.

“ ‘There are crowds of people on the busy streets.

“ ‘I can’t say what large city it is, for so many cities look alike.’

“ ‘Cribbley Crabbley smiled.

“ ‘You are wrong.’

“ ‘Wrong?’ cried his friend.

“ ‘You have not guessed it,’ said Cribbley Crabbley, still smiling.

“ ‘It is some large city, with the streets full of people,’ said his friend.

“ ‘It is a drop of water from the ditch,’ said Cribbley Crabbley.

“ ‘Then he showed his friend what he had really seen through the magic glass.’”



A RAINY DAY

Marjorie stood by the window.
She was drumming idly on the
pane.

She was pouting, too, I am sorry to
say.

Her mother wondered if the face
she saw could be her little girl's.

“What is the trouble, Marjorie?” her mother asked at last.

“Oh, it’s raining,” Marjorie fretted.

“It’s always raining, when I want to play outdoors,” and her red lips still pouted.

Mother looked surprised.

“Did it rain while you were having your lunch in the park yesterday?” she asked.

“Oh, no,” Marjorie answered slowly, “not yesterday.

“But it’s raining now.

“I just hate the rain, when I want to play outdoors.”

“I don’t like my little girl to just hate anything,” said Marjorie’s mother, very gently.

“I think the rain is as beautiful as the sun, for which you are wishing.”

“Rain beautiful? Mother, what can you mean?” and Marjorie opened her eyes very wide.

“The roads were very dusty.

— “The day was very warm.

“The air felt as if you stood before an open furnace door.

“It has rained only a little while.

“But already the dust is laid.

“The streets are washed clean.

“The air is cool and pleasant.”

“Oh, dear!” sighed Marjorie, after she had been quiet for a little while.

“It is raining harder than ever.”

“What does it sound like, as it strikes the roofs?” asked Mother.

Marjorie listened and almost smiled.

“It sounds like many horses, galloping very fast.”

“Yes,” and Mother smiled, too.

“Hear the tramp of their hoofs!

“What a clatter they make!

“Such noisy fellows would never do for Santa Claus’ reindeer, would they?

“And see the spout at the corner of the house, Marjorie.

“How many, many water drops are pushing and crowding their way out!”

“How it pours and pours!” still sighed Marjorie.

“It pours so fast across the window pane I can hardly see through the glass.”

“What a swift, wide river the gutter is now.

“That is the same gutter that was so dusty and dirty only an hour ago.

“Brother will be glad to sail his boat in it as soon as it stops raining.”

“I wish when it stops raining, it would stop forever,” grumbled Marjorie.

“I wish it would never rain again.”

“How soon the flowers would be thirsty!” said Mother.

“You would soon find no pretty flowers blooming in your garden, if it were never to rain again.”

“My flowers will all be drowned, if it never stops raining,” Marjorie fretted.

“Yes,” agreed her mother; “but it will stop some time.

“The sun will come out.

“You and your flowers need both the sun and the rain.”

“I don’t believe any one but you likes the rain, Mother,” said Marjorie.

“You have forgotten the duck.

“I am sure he thinks the rain is fun.”

“Ducks don’t have to wear rubbers,” Marjorie pouted.

“He has little red rubbers.

“They are never lost, because they are always on his feet,” and Mother smiled.

Marjorie opened her eyes very wide again.

“The duck’s rubbers leave a three-toed track in the soft mud,” explained Mother, and Marjorie laughed.

“What funny things you think of, Mother.

“I suppose ducks do like water, any time and anywhere.”

“The duck is not the only one that welcomes the rain, though my little girl does not.

“See the dandelion lift her pretty yellow head from her green, grassy bed!

“Dandelion is thanking the rain.

“It gave her thirsty roots a drink.

“It freshened her dry buds.

“Now the buds will open when the shower is over.

“What do you suppose that toad is saying?” Mother asked.

“How do *I* know what a toad’s croaking means?” answered Marjorie.

“Don’t you see him under that broad, green leaf!

“The leaf is as good a roof for him as our house gives us.

“You are fretting at the rain that keeps you indoors.

“But the toad is croaking,

‘I hope it will pour!’

‘I hope it will pour!’

“He is never so happy as in wet weather.

“If you were in the woods today, you could hear the brook singing’.

“It sings a happy welcome song to every raindrop that comes to it.

“The little brook calls every raindrop it sees to come to it.

“The brook thinks the raindrops will make it a great river.

“The brook promises to carry every raindrop to the sea when it becomes a broad, swift river.”

THE RAINBOW

We had a very hard storm this morning while we were in school.

But it did not last long.

The rain came down in bucketsful.

The wind blew a gale.

Flashes of lightning played among the clouds.

The thunder boomed like many cannons far away.

Then it rumbled like hundreds of barrels rolling down hill.

Very soon the rain stopped, and the gutters were rushing rivers.

The wind died down to a gentle breeze.

The thunder muttered only now and then.

The sun shone through the clouds now, instead of the lightning.

“Oh, Miss Maud, see the beautiful rainbow!” some one cried.

We all looked where he was pointing through the window.

“Indeed it is beautiful!” said Miss Maud.

“It is too beautiful for any of us to miss seeing. Come, children.”

So we all ran to the windows.

Miss Maud watched the bridge of lovely colors with us.

“Iris must be bringing some message to earth,” Miss Maud said.

We all wondered who Iris could be.

At last some one asked who she was.

“Did you see her up in the sky, Miss Maud?” another asked.

Miss Maud smiled.

“It’s only a story, children.

“Run to your seats now, for the rainbow has faded.

“Listen, and I will tell you about Iris.

“Very long ago people believed there was a beautiful queen.

“This beautiful queen lived far up above the clouds, they thought.

“Queens have many people to wait upon them.

“So did this great queen.

“Her name was Juno.

“Iris was one of Queen Juno’s favorite maids.

“She often sent Iris down to earth with messages.

“Can you think of a beautiful woman with golden wings on her shoulders?

“Can you think of her riding in a chariot of shining gold?

“Can you think of a chariot drawn by two peacocks?

“If you can, you know just how Iris looked.

“One day the king saw that it was very hard for Iris to get down to earth.

“She had to come from far up above the clouds.

“So the king gave Iris this beautiful bridge of many colors.

“This bridge makes her journey much easier.

“One end of the bridge is fastened high up in heaven.

“It is fastened above the clouds.

“The other end is held down on the earth by a heavy pot of gold.

“Many people have tried to find the place where the rainbow is fastened on earth.

“If they could find it, they might have this pot of gold for their own.

“But no one has ever yet reached the end of the rainbow.

“So no one has ever found the pot of gold.

“Iris wraps a cloud about her for a cloak whenever she has to carry a message down to earth.

“Then she steps into her chariot of shining gold.

“The peacocks draw her swiftly over this wonderful bridge.

“No one has ever seen Iris herself.

“The peacocks carry her through the air so swiftly.

“We would never know she was journeying down to earth if we did

not see her bright-colored bridge in the sky.

“When it fades, we know Iris has passed over and needs her bridge no longer.”

THE RAINBOW FAIRIES

Some nights the sky is very clear.

The moon is shining, too.

Then the fairies come out to dance and play under the trees.

Once upon a time three little flower fairies were having a fine frolic.

They were playing all by themselves under an oak tree.

The one in the yellow dress was Buttercup.

Forget-me-not was the one in blue.



The one in red was Poppy.

Under another oak tree, not far away, stood three other fairies.

These fairies were not dancing or playing.

They stood watching the fairies in the pretty gay dresses.

These poor little fairies wore old, ragged, faded dresses.

They were not at all the kind of dresses that fairies like to wear.

Buttercup was the first to see the sad little fairies in the shabby clothes.

She stopped her playing at once.

“Come!” she called, and beckoned to them.

“Come play with us.”

But the three fairies only shook their heads and would not come.

“ Oh, do ! ” begged Buttercup.

“ We want you, don't we ? ”

She looked at Forget-me-not and Poppy.

“ Yes, indeed, we do, ” they nodded.

“ Why won't you come ? ” teased Buttercup.

“ Because our clothes are so ragged and dirty, ” one fairy replied.

“ They would not look well at all beside your bright, pretty dresses.

“ But don't stop your fun.

“ We like to watch you, if we cannot play with you, ” said one of the three fairies.

“ How would you like to have

some clothes as pretty as ours?" asked Buttercup?

"If you will come here, we will soon make your old faded dresses look as bright as our own.

"We know a way, don't we?"

Buttercup looked at Forget-me-not and Poppy.

They nodded, "To be sure we do."

When the three fairies heard this, they came fast enough.

They watched Buttercup as she dipped the skirt of her yellow dress into a lily.

The lily was filled with dew.

"Now, Forget-me-not!" Buttercup said.

Forget-me-not dipped the skirt of her blue dress into the same lily.

“Now, come, the one that wants a green dress,” called Buttercup.

“Just jump right into this lily cup.

“Dip in the dew you find there.”

One of the three fairies with the old, faded clothes ran up.

She did just as Buttercup had told her.

When she jumped out of the lily cup, the other two fairies screamed with delight.

She wore a bright, pretty, green dress now.

Poppy and Forget-me-not had been very busy, while all this was going on.

Poppy had dipped the skirt of her red dress in another lily cup.

That lily cup was filled with dew, too.

Forget-me-not had dipped the skirt of her blue dress in the same lily cup.

“Who wants a violet dress?” called Poppy.

“Jump in,” she called, “the one that wants a violet dress.”

One of the fairies who still wore an old, faded dress sprang in.

Again they all screamed with delight.

The second fairy now wore a rich, violet dress.

Buttercup and Poppy had not been

idle, while the violet dress was being made.

Buttercup and Poppy had found still another lily cup filled with dew.

They had dipped the skirts of their red and yellow dresses in it.

“Jump in, little fairy,” they called.

There was only one now who still wore her old, faded dress.

“Jump in and see what color your new gown will be.”

The little fairy was only too glad to jump gayly in.

She screamed with the rest of them when she saw the bright orange dress she wore.

Now where were the little fairies

who would not play because their dresses were so old and faded?

These little fairies, in bright, new dresses, danced and laughed and sang as merrily as any fairies.

Buttercup, Poppy, and Forget-me-not were happy, too, because they could give them these bright new dresses.

The six fairies were having so fine a time they did not see that dark clouds covered the moon.

Even the bright stars were hidden.

At last the rain came pattering down.

This sent the six fairies scampering away to get under cover.

Each one hid in a flower.

Soon they all fell asleep and slept soundly until the morning.

Then the bright morning sun drove away the dark clouds and the rain.

As soon as the six fairies saw the sun, they came out of the flowers.

Then they flew up to the sky, hand in hand.

There they made a beautiful rainbow with their gay dresses.

AUTUMN LEAVES

October is the month when the leaves have such gay colors.

They light up all the world with their brightness.

Once October gave a party to hundreds and hundreds of leaves.

They danced on a golden carpet which the sun had laid for them.

Mr. Wind and his big band played the music for their dancing.

The dancers wore the gayest of gowns.

At last they grew tired of dancing.

Then they played hide and seek as the children do.

They played until the sun went down.

Did you know that the leaves are the lungs of the trees?

We pressed a dry leaf upon a pane of glass.

When we took it away the glass was wet.

The moisture had come from little mouths in the leaf.

These little mouths in the leaf are like the little mouths in our skin.

We put the stem of a yellow leaf in the ink bottle.

In a little while the bright leaf grew dark.

The stem had drawn the ink up into its veins.

I used to think that the mother tree must be sorry when the wind carries off her leaf children.

But this is not so.

The tree is glad to let them go, for their work is finished.

They have earned a holiday, and the bright new dresses which their mother gives them.

They have worn their summer clothes a long time.

They are rusty and dusty and soiled, now.

The leaves would break the tree if they stayed on all winter.

When the snow came, each leaf would catch a handful.

All this snow would be too heavy for the branches.

The leaves do not all dress alike when they start off on their holiday.

All the oak family choose rich browns and reds.

The elm children are always dressed in cloth of shining gold.

It takes three colors for new gowns

for the chestnut trees — green and brown and gold.

The maple tree is the *Red Riding Hood* of the woods.

Her scarlet cloak and hood light the dark forest.

Once a little leaf sighed and cried.

The wind told her he would pull her off some day.

He said he would throw her down on the ground to die.

But the tree told the little leaf not to be afraid, — to hold on tightly.

“You need not go until you want to go, little leaf,” said the tree.

The little leaf was happy all summer long.

In the fall she saw the other leaves putting on beautiful new dresses.

She heard that it was because they were going to fly away.

Then, of course, she wanted to go, too.

When she had grown bright and beautiful, like the other leaves, the wind whirled her away.

She flew through the air like a spark of fire.

At last she fell quietly down under a fence.

Very soon she fell asleep and dreamed a beautiful dream that lasted forever and a day.



THE RABBIT

One pleasant afternoon mother and I were out in the park.

We were sitting very quietly on one of the benches.

A timid little rabbit jumped out from some bushes.

We kept as still as mice so he

would not be frightened and run back.

He nibbled at some roots and frisked about under the trees.

He was having the best of times.

We watched his long ears which he could move so quickly.

We saw his funny little tail that was no tail at all.

But all in a minute Bunny's good time was spoiled.

The poor little thing had to run for his life.

A dog came running and yelping and barking.

He tried hard to catch poor Bunny.

Bunny scampered off into some hiding-place he knew.

We were so afraid that he would not be quick enough to get away from the dog.

The dog would surely have killed Bunny if he had ever caught him.

Robbie Johnson's mother invited all the children in Robbie's Sunday School class to his birthday party.

His birthday was the Monday after Easter.

Each one of us had a little cake.

The cake was covered with thick white frosting and pink candies.

We hadn't taken many bites of the good cakes before our teeth struck something hard.

We each ate the cake off to see what was inside.

Then we came to a tiny white china rabbit.

Robbie's mother said that we were all to take our rabbits home with us.

The rabbits were our Easter surprise.

A large stuffed rabbit was in the center of the table where we had our goodies.

The rabbit was holding a nest of eggs in his front paws.

But the eggs were not real eggs.

They were little round candy eggs of all colors.

I will tell you why at Easter time children have rabbits and candy eggs.

A long time ago Spring wished to

send all the children some kind of a present.

The present was to tell them that Spring had come to them.

So she decided to send every child in the land an egg.

But who could go carefully enough not to break them?

The bear thought he could carry the eggs safely.

He wished very much to go.

But it would never do to send him.

The children would be frightened to death when they saw a bear coming.

No one could carry the eggs more gently and carefully than the rabbit.

The rabbit was the very one to send.

But she didn't want to go because

she was afraid of the big dogs she might meet.

At last it was decided that the rabbit should go with her eggs very early in the morning.

She would go before daylight.

Then the dogs would be taking their last nap.

But how was she to carry so many eggs?

Several birds offered to make a nest for the eggs.

But the birds who offered made very rough nests.

Bunny did not think their nests would do at all.

At last Oriole said she would weave a long deep pocket.

Bunny could carry the eggs safely in that.

The sheep heard what the oriole was going to do.

So she sent some of her own soft wool to line the pocket and make the eggs still safer.

When the nest was finished, Bunny ran off with his present of beautiful eggs.

There was one for every child in the land.

Ever since Bunny's first visit all the children find bright-colored eggs by their beds when they wake on Easter morning.



JACK FROST

Mother Earth has four bedquilts.
She has one for each season of the
year.

There is a brown one for spring
and a green one for summer.

There is a red one for autumn and
a white one for winter.

The red one is sewed with yellow thread.

It makes an autumn leaf bed-spread.

Mother earth gets out her third bedquilt at this time of year.

She spreads it over the little wild flowers.

About the time this bright bedquilt is spread over the earth, a wonderful artist comes to town.

He goes about with his brush in his hand, busily painting whatever he sees.

He puts his gayest colors on the leaves.

He paints the leaves as red as fire and as yellow as gold.

You'll find he has been out in the orchard with his paintbrush, too.

For the apples' cheeks are gayly colored.

The grapes hang in heavy bunches on the vines.

He must brush them very gently and carefully for fear they will drop.

He touches the tassels of the corn with just a little of his yellow paint.

No little girl has prettier cheeks than the pink ones he gives the peaches.

But Jack Frost is too full of fun to spend all his time painting.

It is time to go nutting after Jack Frost has opened the prickly burrs.

Then the wind gives the trees a shake.

Boys and girls know it is time to go nutting after Jack Frost has done his work.

Jack Frost is full of mischief.

He pulls our ears and tweaks our noses and pinches our toes.

The brooks stop their babbling when they hear his voice.

They know he will hold them fast, so that his little friends may have fun skating.

At last there are no more leaves, or peaches, or grapes for him to paint.

Then Jack Frost takes a window for his canvas.

When we wake in the morning, we

see how busily he has been painting while we slept.

There are beautiful trees and flowers and birds on our windows.

Sometimes there are churches with tall towers and slender steeples.

Jack Frost has a powder box as wonderful as his paint box.

He sprinkles the trees with this sparkling powder.

Then they look as if they were covered with pearls and diamonds.

There is just one unkind trick that Jack Frost delights to play.

It is the only bad thing I ever heard of his doing.

Whenever he finds a pitcher full of water, he gives it a crack.

He nearly always breaks the pitcher into pieces.

Boys and girls are always glad to hear that Jack Frost is traveling down from his home in the North.

There would be no skating, or sliding, or snowballing, if Jack Frost did not come.

How does he always get here at just the right time, I wonder?

The storybooks say he sails on an iceberg for a ship.

His captain and crew are Mr. Wind and the breezes.

THE SQUIRREL

No one was late at school today.

For Miss Maud told us yesterday

she would have a beautiful surprise for us.

The surprise was on the table when we came in.

It looked like a large cage.

We could only guess what was in it, for it was covered with the table spread.

I almost knew it was a rabbit.

But when Miss Maud took off the cover, I saw it was his cousin, Little Brown Bushy Tail.

He was holding a plump nut in his paws which he uses like tiny hands.

As he cracked his nut, he winked his black eyes at us.

That meant, "I might be in a worse place than this."

Do you suppose Bushy Tail has a wife and little ones?

Perhaps he has, high up in some hollow tree.

If he has, they must be wondering why he does not come home.

Did you ever think that the squirrels never have to pay a cent of rent for their lovely homes in the tree tops?

Our squirrel looks as if he were thinking of something.

Perhaps he is thinking how many nuts he will hide away in his hollow tree for winter.

He will have to know how many nuts his little brown babies can eat, and that will be hard to tell.

The best way to do, little Bushy Tail, is to gather all the nuts you can.

Then you will be sure to have enough for cold days.



Once some squirrels thought they would like to travel, so a dozen of them set out together.

They went gayly along for miles and miles, but at last they came to a river.

How were they ever going to cross it, they wondered.

They gathered pieces of bark and chips, which would do for ships.

And they curled up their bushy tails for sails.

Then the wind blew them safely from shore to shore.

A mountain and a squirrel once had a quarrel.

It was something like the quarrel the wind and the sun had.

The mountain called the squirrel a "little prig!"

Bushy Tail told the mountain that all things were not made to do the same things.

He knew he was not as large and grand as the mountain.

But the mountain was not as small as he, nor half as spry.

Bushy Tail told the mountain that he could not crack nuts any more than squirrels could carry forests on their backs.

I think Bushy Tail was right, don't you ?

THE TURKEY

Only a few days more and we shall be eating our Thanksgiving dinner.

Aren't you hungry for turkey and cranberry sauce ?

If I were a good fairy, every child in school should have as much turkey as he could eat.

Guess what the letter "T" stands

for to boys and girls, at this time of year.

Thanksgiving begins with "T."

Thursday begins with "T."

Thanksgiving always comes on Thursday.

"T" stands, too, for the proud Turkey that struts about the barnyard.

Poor fellow! He will not spread that fine tail of his many more days.

Perhaps he would not gobble so loudly if he knew how very soon he was to lose his head.

Long ago, when Columbus came to our country, he found turkeys running wild in the woods.

Columbus had never seen a turkey

and did not know what it was, for there were no turkeys in his country.

He did not know how good turkey is.

He found out that turkey is very good to eat.

So he carried some turkeys with him when he went back to Spain.

When the Pilgrims gave their first Thanksgiving dinner, the Indians brought some turkeys.

Little Indian boys used to hunt them in the forest for their feasts.

Our mothers' dusters are made of the feathers Turkey Gobbler thinks are so fine.

What would Turkey Gobbler say if he knew that ?



Maybe he would like better to have them on some lady's hat.

Once a turkey chased me.

I wondered why he seemed so angry.

Grandma told me he did not like my red dress.

The turkey is a very anxious mother.

She calls her little ones all the time, "Turk! Turk! Turk!"

Some people say that is why the bird was called turkey.

I like the name the Indians gave the turkey.

They call it, "Oo-coo-coo" because it has such a queer voice.

There was once a little turkey who liked her own way too well.

She would never ask the old turkeys what she had better do.

She said : "I am no baby.

"I am a half-grown turkey and old enough to take care of myself."

So off she went alone one day.

She did not know that a hungry mink was watching for her.

This sly mink sprang out from the bushes and caught her by the throat.

The feathers flew all over.

They covered the ground like snow.

Poor little turkey !

She had her own way, but she never came home again.

That sly mink made a supper of her.

THE SNOW

When we looked out of the window this morning, we hurrahed and hurrahed.

We made so much noise that mother came up to see what was the matter.

The snow had fallen all night while we were asleep.

It had spread a soft, white blanket over the grass and flowers.

The grass and flowers had gone to sleep.

We had a great time finding our new mittens which Grandma had knit for us.

Then out we scampered to make a snow man.

We rolled a big snowball for his body.
At last it was so big that we could not push it any farther.

A smaller ball did for his head.
Pieces of coal made his two black eyes.

We painted red lips for him with cranberry juice.

We put on his head an old hat that we found in the attic.

Tom ran to the corner store for a penny clay pipe to put between his red lips.

When we had made his two arms stick fast, he was as fine a fellow as you would wish to see.

Last year, when the snow came, Baby Helen was only three.

Mother put on her coat and hood and mittens and let her go out to play in the snow.

We watched her making snowballs.

She put them all in a row on her sled.

She told us they were apples.

At last she bit into one of the snow apples with her pretty white teeth.

She made such a face when she found it was cold!

Cook was out of the kitchen and Baby Helen came in to bake her snow apples in the oven for tea.

In a little while cook opened the oven door to see if her gingerbread were baked.

Cook gave a scream.

Her gingerbread was spoiled and the oven was half full of water.

Baby Helen came in to see if her apples were baked.

We knew, then, who had spoiled cook's gingerbread.

But Baby Helen does not know to this day what became of the snow apples that she left in the oven to bake.

Another time she made some birds of the snow.

We used to make birds of clay in the kindergarten.

Baby Helen put her birds all along the fence.

Just then mother called her in to

take her nap, so she left her birds on the fence.

The sun was very warm and bright that day.

Baby Helen's birds were all melted long before her nap was over.

When she came out again, she looked for her birds.

She looked so surprised to find every one gone.

She told mother all her birds had gone away up into the sky.

They had gone so far that they could not find the way back.

The snow is the white bedquilt Mother Earth puts on.

She first takes off the red one, which is sewed with yellow thread.

Mother Earth has four bedquilts, you know.

Her four bedquilts are made by four different people.

Mother Earth spreads this beautiful white one over her when she is cold.

This quilt is made by a wonderful weaver who lives high up among the clouds.

We learn how to weave at school.

We know this wonderful weaver must have something for a loom.

He must have something for a shuttle, too.

What do you suppose he uses for a loom?

He takes one of the clouds piled high all about him for a loom.

The wind makes the best of shuttles.

It flies so quickly backwards and forwards.

It goes in and out and over and under.

You would think his loom and shuttle were too big to make anything fine on it.

How could he make anything as fine as lace on it?

But he does make very fine lace for the trees and bushes.

Sometimes the sun is very full of mischief.

Then the sun unravels all the work this wonderful weaver has done.

Pussy plays the same way with

Grandma's knitting and pulls it all out.

THE SHEEP

When I came into the house this noon, I smelled camphor.

I knew then what mother was doing.

She was putting away our pretty summer dresses and getting out our thick woolen clothes.

The days are growing cold now.

Our woolen clothes feel very heavy at first.

But when Jack Frost tries to nip us, we shall be glad that we have them to keep us warm.

Do you know whom we have to

thank for our warm coats and caps and stockings and mittens?

It is "Baa! Baa! Black Sheep" with his bags of wool.

He is glad to lose them in summer.

You remember the story of Mary and her little lamb that grew to be a sheep.

Mary sent her lamb with the others down to the river to be washed.

Then its fleece was as white as snow.

Then Mary's lamb went to the shearer, who cut off its heavy wool.

This wool was made into a nice warm coat for Mary.

When my grandmother was a little girl, she lived on her father's farm.

There were many sheep and lambs on that farm.

One day she found a little lamb lying under a tree.

It was nearly dead because it was so cold and hungry.

She wrapped it up in her apron and took it home.

Her mother helped her make a warm bed for it in an old basket.

They gave it all the warm milk it would drink.

When it was no longer cold and hungry, it said, "Baa! Baa!" as if to thank them.

It grew to be such a pet, it would

follow Grandmother all over the farm, just like a dog.

Its wool was soft and clean and fine.

The birds carried off bits of it to line their nests.

And Grandmother wore stockings that were made from the wool that grew on her pet's back.

There was once a poor little boy.

He could never have a new shirt of his own because his mother was very poor.

There were seven children to be fed and clothed.

He was the youngest, so he always had to wear a shirt that the others had outgrown.

One day his little old shirt dropped off and he had none.

A lamb saw the boy shivering.

The lamb felt so sorry for him that she pulled off all her wool and gave it to him.

A thorn bush passed its branches through the wool and combed it.

A spider worked busily with his little feet.

He spun the wool and wove the finest piece of cloth you ever saw.

A crab sat by the brook and saw all this.

Then the crab cut out a little shirt with his great shears.

A bird, who sat on a bush near by, wanted to make it.

The bird found a long thread and used its bill for a needle.

Then she flew back and forth, back and forth, working busily until the shirt was finished.

How happy the boy must have been to have a new shirt all his own.





THE CAMEL

The Three Wise Men who came to see the little Christ Child rode on camels.

They were snow-white camels, and they were covered with beautiful embroidered cloths.

Strings of beads and chains of tiny bells were hung around their great long necks.

The Wise Men could not have come on horses if they had wished.

Where they lived there are great deserts. There are miles and miles and miles of sand.

Horses cannot be used in the desert, for there are no streams of water, no grass, no plants in the desert.

There is nothing for horses to eat and drink.

Horses cannot go long without food and drink.

But the camel has a stomach which holds enough to last him three days or more.

The camel has a hump on his back.

Some camels have two humps.

The camel's hump tells whether he has had plenty to eat or whether he is hungry.

If the hump looks small, you may be sure he has had very little to eat.

If the hump looks large, he has had plenty to eat.

The hump is his storehouse.

There is another reason why horses cannot be used in the desert.

The sharp hoof of the horse sinks deep into the sand at every step.

This makes it very hard for the horse to walk.

The camel has a large padded foot which does not cut into the sand at all.

I saw some camels once in the park.

A man lifted me up on the biggest camel.

I felt so queer.

I felt as if I were in a boat on a very rough sea.

It was not at all like riding a horse.

The camel is called "The Ship of the Desert."

I think that is a very good name for him.

Grandma told me the beautiful shawl she wears on Sundays is made of camel's hair.

My sister takes painting lessons.

She told me that the best paint brushes are the camel's-hair brushes.

If any one wishes to ride the camel, the camel kneels down.

The little Arab children teach him to do this when he is very young.

The little Arab children switch the camel's legs while they feed him from bowls of milk.

They do this until the camel drops to his knees.

Then people can climb onto his back.

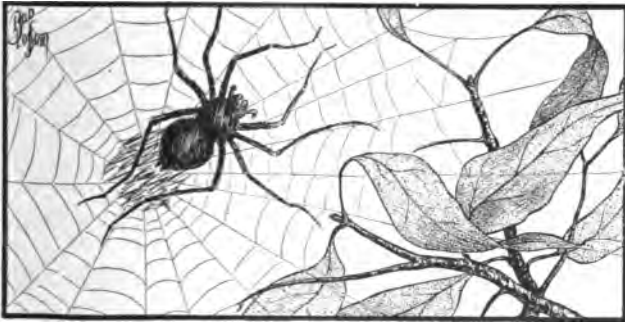
Did you ever hear the story of the camel who pushed his master out of the tent because he was cold?

The camel did not push his master out all at once.

First the camel got his head inside, then his fore feet, then his shoulders, then his hind feet.

At last he filled the tent.

There was no room for his master then, except out in the cold.



THE SPIDER

At school we were told to hunt for spiders.

We were not to catch them or to kill them, but to watch them.

I found a spider's web in a cellar window that had been open all summer.

Flies and moths went in and out at that cellar window.

The spider had spun her web there to catch them as they flew in and out.

My grandmother says cobwebs are good to put on your cut finger to stop the bleeding.

Papa said that a spider once spun down from the gas jet over his desk to the letter he was writing.

The dusty garret is the best of places to hunt for the spider and her tiny, round, white eggs.

It takes only about two weeks for the eggs to hatch, but they do not leave the nest for some days.

The spider's body has a soft part and also a hard part, and to this hard part his eight legs are fastened.

He has the same number of eyes and legs.

Birds think spiders are very good eating, and wasps feed them to their young ones.

Once a very great man learned a lesson as he watched a spider try and try again to fasten her thread.

He was much discouraged because his soldiers had been beaten many times.

He saw how the little spider tried and tried until she *won*.

So he decided to lead his soldiers on until they won.

The spider is the oldest weaver in the world.

She was once a beautiful girl named Arachne.

But she grew very proud because she thought no one could weave as well as she.

She even told Minerva she could weave a more beautiful picture than she could.

So they had a weaving match, but Arachne did not win.

The angry Minerva changed her at once from a beautiful girl into a spider.

Her arms grew thin and black.

Her fingers were little claws and her body grew as small as the spider we saw to-day.

All the rest of her life Arachne did nothing but spin, spin, spin.

Ever since that day, all other spiders have spun, spun, spun.

THE WIND

All the boys on our block are busy these days, making kites.

We got Elton's big kite up so high it took us ten minutes to bring it down.

Elton was not strong enough to do it alone, so his father helped him haul it in.

When kite time comes, we boys always wish we lived in the country.

It is so hard to keep our kites from getting tangled in the wires.

Nobody in all the world has ever seen the one who flies our kites for us.

We have all heard him whisper in the trees.

We have heard him whistle round the house at night.

We have often heard him rattle the doors and windows.

He has shrieked down the chimney on stormy nights.

We have felt him kiss us gently on the cheek.

He has fanned us lightly with his breezes.

He often grows so rough that he pushes us along the road.

Sometimes he even knocks us down.
Then he shrieks with wild laughter
when he sees what he has done.

Sometimes he blows off our caps.
That sends us on a merry chase
after them.

Our caps go flying through the air
like birds.

We know the wind is strong and
often cold.

What he looks like no one has ever
found out.

He keeps himself well hidden from
us.

Long ago people believed that
there was a king of the winds.

Æolus was the name of the king
of the winds.

Æolus had six sons.

They were big, strong, unruly boys, and were always getting into trouble.

So their father kept them safely locked up in a deep cave under the earth.

He never let but one out at a time.

One of these boys made the earth cold and stormy whenever he got out.

People closed all their doors and windows.

They heaped coal on their fires when they heard his rough voice.

Another of Æolus' sons buried the earth in snow when his turn came to leave the cave.

The third son thought that there was no better fun than tearing off the roofs of houses.

He thought it was fine sport to knock apples from the trees.

He liked to see how high he could pile the waves.

Among all these rough boys there was one that was gentle.

This one thought it better fun to scatter flowers and sunshine.

The March wind must feel hurt if he hears all the things people say of him.

And yet, who but the March wind dries up the snow banks when we are tired of winter?

Who but he chases the snow clouds

across the sky like frightened sheep?

The wild ducks wait for the March wind to break the ice in the river.

Then they can have a swim.

The yards are too wet for the boys to play marbles in until the March wind has dried them.

His busiest days are wash days.

He must shake all the many clothes lines in the land.

But who ever thinks of thanking the March wind for all that he has done?

The four winds are not at all alike.

They do very different things.

The north wind brings the cold and snow.

He makes everybody hurry to some warm place.

The south wind brings the warm weather.

He makes the corn grow.

He reddens the cheeks of the apples and peaches.

When the east wind blows the farmers always say, "We shall have rain before night."

The flowers and birds come back when the west wind calls them.

I think the south wind coaxes them, too.

Once the wind and a weathercock tried to please everybody in town.

But they had to give it up at last.

If the weathercock pointed north,

people grumbled about the cold weather.

When the weathercock pointed west, they fretted because their potatoes and corn were rotting.

The weathercock was sure he would please them all by pointing south.

But then they scolded — because everything was too dry.

There was only one way left to point, the east.

When he pointed that way, the people were crosser than ever.

The east wind made them all catch colds.

At last the wind and the weathercock decided not to listen to the grumblers any more.

They decided to blow and point as they thought best.

THE SUN

I

Do you suppose the sun ever goes to bed?

When he leaves us, he is making morning for some one else.

Just as soon as he has made one morning, he travels on to make one somewhere else.

There is always some place where it is morning.

It is no wonder the sun has to work all the time.

He can never find time to go to bed.

While we are on our way to school, the boys and girls in China are being tucked up in bed.

When we are singing our morning song, the children, way over in India, are saying "good night" to one another.

When we are eating our supper and the lamps are lighted, other children, far away, are getting dressed for breakfast.

Our baby thinks he can catch the sunbeams that dance and flit about here and there.

Baby sits on the floor in the sun.

He stretches out his tiny fat hand to catch all the sunbeams his chubby little fist will hold.



He looks so surprised when he opens his hand and finds nothing there.

“All gone!” he’ll cry and shake his head at us.

“All gone!”

Mother says that baby and all of us can scatter sunbeams, if we cannot catch them.

She means that kind words and loving smiles are a kind of sunbeam.

That kind makes people as happy as the real sunlight that baby tries to catch.

The sun is like a great, round eye.

He watches me through my window before I am awake.

He has a round, fat, jolly face like Santa Claus.

He looks as if he were laughing at one all the time.

There is a flower that has a round, jolly face, too.

It is just like the sun's own face.

This flower never forgets to watch the sun every day as it climbs up the skies.

The sun is like a great lamp hung high up in the sky.

When it is time for the sandman to come around to little boys and girls, this great lamp is put out.

When it is time to work and play again, the great lamp shines as bright as ever.

We always find it in its place, high up in the sky.

II

One day the little sunbeams teased the great, round sun to let them go down to earth.

They wanted to go down to earth and play a while.

When the golden sun said, "Yes," they started off in a shining crowd.

They were as merry as children and as busy as bees.

Every cloud that floated by them was painted the most beautiful color by some sunbeam.

All the sunbeams tried their brushes on the sky as they passed through.

A little star cried, and why do you suppose he cried? He cried because he thought he would have to stop shining; now the sunbeams had come.

But the sunbeams told him to shine on just the same.

They would put a golden screen before him.

That would hide his twinkling from the earth people.

At last the sunbeams reached the end of their journey.

They went at once to find the children.

All the children were still fast asleep in bed.

Locked doors cannot keep out sunbeams.

They climbed in through the windows.

The children looked so pretty.

They were dreaming of dolls and guns and sugarplums.

The sunbeams gilded every little round head and made the children still prettier.

This gave the children golden hair.

The sunbeams were very much pleased with their work.

They poked open the children's eyes, so that they could see how pretty they were.

"Wake up! Wake up!" the sunbeams cried.

But the little folk were still sleepy and they only winked and blinked.

“Come back from the Land of Nod.

“Come back to earth,” the sunbeams cried.

But the children only yawned and stretched.

“We have brought you a present,” the sunbeams cried.

“Wake up and see what it is.”

The children heard the word “present,” and they were wide awake in a twinkling.

“A present! What is it? Let’s see!” all the children cried at once.

“A sunny day in which to play,” laughed the sunbeams.

Then they took hold of hands and

danced around all the little white beds.

III

Another day four little sunbeams started down to earth.

They decided to see how much good they could do before night.

They would not do just as they pleased all day.

Each one would try to make some one else very happy.

At night the great sun would call them home.

They were to meet in the west and tell each other what they had done.

The first sunbeam peeped in through the door of a house.

It was a very old, tumble-down house.

A baby sat on the floor.

The sunbeam began a merry game of hide and seek with the baby.

The little one laughed and crowed at this strange, bright playmate.

The second sunbeam peeped in through a window.

He saw a poor sick man lying on the bed.

The man was very thin and white.

He looked sad, as if he had been sick for a long time.

The little sunbeam crept softly into the dark room.

She whispered stories in the sick

man's ear of birds and flowers and woods.

At last the sick man dreamed a beautiful dream.

He dreamed he was walking through the cool green woods.

He heard the birds singing their sweet songs in the tree tops.

He watched the brook dance merrily over the stones.

He gathered handfuls of the sweet wild flowers he loved.

The sick man was sleeping sweetly when the little sunbeam stole softly out of the room.

There was a happy smile on his face.

The third sunbeam spied a flower.

The flower was hanging her pretty head.

She was sad, because she was all alone in the garden.

There was no one who loved her.

The sunbeam stole straight into the lonely flower's heart.

The sunbeam loved it and warmed it.

He whispered bright happy things to her.

At last the little flower was no longer sad.

She lifted her pretty white face to the sun once more.

She saw the world was not nearly as dark as she had thought it was.

The fourth sunbeam found a little girl.

This little girl was sitting all alone.
Her hands were folded idly in her lap.

The sunbeam wondered why she was not romping and playing.

Merry children were playing in the street.

The sunbeam looked again and saw that the poor little girl was blind.

Even the little sunbeam found it hard now to be bright and to shine.

This poor little girl could never see the flowers nor the grass nor the trees.

She could never see his great father, the sun.

The little sunbeam kissed the little girl's hands very gently.

Her little white hands lay folded so quietly in her lap.

He kissed the poor eyes, too, very gently.

Those eyes had never seen this great, beautiful, wonderful world.

Then the sunbeam whispered in the little girl's ear.

He told her some day angels would open her closed eyes.

Then she would see more wonderful sights than any on earth.

At last night came.

The great sun called his children home.

The four sunbeams met in the west—as they had promised each other.

Each little sunbeam said this had been the happiest day of his life.

Why, do you think, had it been the happiest day of his life?

I think it was because each one had tried to make some one else's day happy.

IV

Miss Maud showed us a picture to-day.

The picture told a wonderful story.

It told us what the people used to believe about the sun long, long ago.

In the picture was a two-wheeled chariot.

The chariot was drawn by four beautiful horses.

Very long ago people thought the sun was a chariot of fire.

They thought this chariot came up out of the sea every morning.

This chariot was supposed to belong to a very great god.

This god lived on a high mountain way up above the clouds.

Zeus was the great god's name.

Zeus had many children.

He would let none of his children drive this sun chariot, except Apollo.

Apollo is the handsome young god the picture shows in the chariot.

See! He is driving the four prancing horses with only one hand.

The beautiful women dancing around the chariot are the Hours.

Aurora is flying through the air, scattering flowers wherever she goes.

Aurora is the name given to the early morning.

She is the dawn, tinted by the rising sun.

A little cherub, the morning star, is flying after Aurora.

The cherub carries a lighted torch in his hand.

Aurora is looking back at the morning star.

Apollo had a golden-haired son, called Phaëthon.

Phaëthon did not live with his father.

He lived down in the valley with his beautiful mother.

One day Phaëthon wished very much to see his father.

So his mother told him the way to his father's palace.

When Phaëthon reached his father's home, he could hardly see.

His eyes were blinded by the glitter of the shining gold.

The palace was made of shining gold.

Apollo sat on his great high throne.

He saw his son coming and asked him why he was there.

Phaëthon said the people on earth would not believe Apollo was his father.

He wished to make them believe it.

So he had come to ask one thing of his father.

Apollo told Phaëthon to wish for anything, and he should have it.

Then Phaëthon begged his father to let him drive the sun chariot.

“Just one day, Father,” he begged, “then the earth people will surely believe that you are my father.”

But Apollo shook his head.

He told Phaëthon he was not strong enough.

He was not wise enough to drive the sun chariot even one day.

Apollo begged Phaëthon to change his wish.

“Wish for something I can give you, my son,” said Apollo.

But Phaëthon begged so hard.
This one thing was what he
wanted.

So, at last, Apollo told him he
might have his foolish wish.

It was then just the hour for Apollo
to start on his journey.

He made this journey every day in
his chariot.

Aurora threw open the gates of the
morning.

Phaëthon sprang into his father's
place in the chariot.

He gathered up the reins and
dashed through the gates.

His father was trying to tell him
many things, but he did not stop to
listen.

The horses very soon knew that Apollo was not holding the reins.

So they dashed on like wild horses.

Phaëthon could not guide them at all.

Soon he even lost his way.

The horses went wherever they pleased.

In a little while they dragged the fiery chariot very close to earth.

The heat from the chariot was very great.

Plants shriveled up and died.

Deep rivers dried up in their beds.

Mountains and cities burned to ashes.

Even the poor earth people themselves turned as black as cinders.

Apollo's father sat on his high throne in heaven.

He saw that something must be done to stop this wild ride.

So he struck poor Phaëthon with a thunderbolt.

Phaëthon fell from his chariot into the water far below.

Then Apollo's father, Zeus, called to the horses.

The horses were very tired by this time.

They knew the voice of Zeus.

They came slowly back into the road they went over every day.

At last night came.

Four tired horses stood at the gates of the west, waiting to pass through.



PUSSY WILLOW

Today, in drawing, we made the prettiest covers for our March calendars.

First we drew a rail fence with posts.

On the fence we pasted several gray pussy willows.

We picked them off from the twigs we had brought.

After the pussies were well fas-

tened on the rails, we drew a tail for each one.

They did look just like plump, gray pussies.

You could not see even the tip of a paw.

There was no sign of a sharp claw.

These pussies must be the kind that cannot scratch.

You would listen a long time, too, before you heard these pussies purr or mew.

These pussies come every year to tell us that spring is on the way.

They tell us that she is almost here.

I wonder if these dainty pussies

would not be glad to jump down from their slender twigs.

Wouldn't they like to frisk and run about like other pussies?

Even their warm fur coats would not have kept out the cold and the snow all the long winter.

Pussy was snugly tucked in a little brown cradle last fall.

There she slept until now.

Now she wakes to give the spring's message to us.

Her cradle is rocked by the same nurse that swings the Indian baby's cradle.

To and fro—to and fro—sometimes roughly, sometimes gently, the wind rocks Pussy's cradle.

She sleeps so soundly, how does she know that it is time to wake?

She never comes too soon and never sleeps too late.

The sunbeams always call the pussies in time.

The sun peeps into each brown cradle and tells Pussy that winter has gone.

By and by the days will grow warmer.

The breezes will not be so cold.

Then Pussy will shake off her fur coat, that looks so much like velvet.

Pussy has a pretty gown of green and yellow under her silver gray coat that kept out the cold.

She wears this green and yellow gown all the spring.

Once Mr. Robin played a very unkind trick on Pussy.

He whispered something about her to the birds and the buds and the brook and the grasses.

This is what Mr. Robin whispered.

He said: "Pussy keeps on her gray fur hood because she has no hair."

The brook was so rude as to shout at her.

"Bald head! Bald head!

"Has to wear a hood, because she has no hair.

"Bald head! Bald head!"

Pussy felt very badly, you may be sure.

But she knew all her friends who believed Robin's story would soon have a surprise.

Only a few mornings after, Pussy shook her bright, golden curls in the breeze.

Robin was so ashamed.

He went away and hid himself for a long time.

The branches of the tree where Pussy lives make the best kind of whistles, if you only know how to make them.

We boys always choose a smooth, round twig.

Then we cut a little ring just through the outside bark.

Then we tap and rap and pat it



gently to loosen the bark, so that it may turn round.

Next, you must be oh, so careful to slip off the bark.

You must not break it the least bit.

Now you cut away the inside part.

Then you make a place to put your lips when you are ready to blow your whistle.

All there is to do now is to put the bark back very carefully.

Then you have as fine a whistle as any boy could ask for.

THE DANDELION

“Hold up your chins, children,” Miss Maud said one day.

“Let me see how many of you like butter.”

She held a great yellow dandelion under James' chin.

Then she laughed and said:—

“Yes, James wants the butter very thick on his bread.”

“We can tell who likes butter by holding buttercups under their chins, too,” said Helen.

“Yes, Buttercup will answer the same question:—

“‘Do you like butter?’

“Dandelion tells something more than that.

“Do you know what else Dandelion tells, children?” asked Miss Maud.

“It tells whether your mother wants you,” said Fred.

“Does it?” and Miss Maud laughed.

“That is news to me, Fred.

“How does Dandelion tell that?”

“We say, ‘Tell me, Dandelion,

“‘Does my mother want me?’

“Then we blow as hard as we can on a dandelion that has gone to seed.

“We can’t blow but once.

“If all the seeds fly off at one blow, mother does want us.”

“And if some of the seeds still stay on?” asked Miss Maud.

“Then mother does not want you,” said Fred.

The children all nodded.

“Then we can play a little longer.

“We need not go home just now,” James explained.

“I suppose, when you want very much to play longer, you don’t blow as hard as you can.”

The children all laughed and nodded again.

“Then there are three things Dandelion tells us.

“For you have not yet guessed what I was thinking about.”

“I know!” shouted Tom.

“The dandelion tells time as well as any clock.

“When I was a very small girl,” said Miss Maud, “my grandmother taught me to say:—

“ ‘Dandelion, the ball of down.

The school boy's clock in every town.’

“But I am afraid boys and girls would be late at school if they went by the dandelion clock.

“How do you tell time by the dandelion clock, James ?

“It has a prettier face than the real clock.

“But it has no minute hand nor hour hand.”

“We blow, and count as we blow,” answered James.

“One o'clock ! two o'clock ! three o'clock ! until every seed has flown away.

“There is nothing left of the dandelion but a bald head.”

“Look up at the great sun, children.

“Then look down at the grass.

“It is thick with the yellow dandelions.

“Does it make you think of anything?” asked Miss Maud.

“The bright dandelions look like tiny golden suns.

“They have dropped down from the sky to shine in the green grass,” said one boy.

“Good!” cried Miss Maud.

“Try again, children.

“What else does the dandelion look like?”

“A little plate, heaped with shining gold.”

“Good again!

“Perhaps it is some of that pot of gold they tell us is at the foot of the rainbow.

“What next?” asked Miss Maud.

“Mamma told me that Mother Nature wears a beautiful green velvet cloak all summer.

“The many dandelions are the bright gold buttons on this cloak.

“The cloak is fastened and trimmed with these gold buttons.”

“That is the best of all we have heard,” smiled Miss Maud.

“Think of one more thing about the dandelion.

“Then I’ll tell you a story,” Miss Maud promised.

“Perhaps the dandelion is a gay little fairy,” said Helen.

Helen read all the fairy books she could find.

“Tell us how the little lady is dressed, then, Helen,” said Miss Maud.

“She wears a waist of green.

“She has a skirt of brightest yellow in the daytime,” Helen said slowly.

“Oh, does she change her gay dress when night comes?”

“Yes, she changes it for a nightgown.

“But it is a green nightgown.

“It is not white like our nightgowns.

“Dandelion is up and dressed very early.

“So, unless the day is dark and cloudy, we do not see her green nightgown.”

“That was a very pretty story, Helen,” said Miss Maud.

“I’m sure we shall all like to think of Dandelion as a gayly dressed fairy.

“And now for my story.

“It is a short one today.

“It was a bright, cold winter morning.

“The ground was covered with snow.

“Not so much as a leaf stirred.

““Who called Dandelion out to freeze his pretty face in the biting wind?

““Whoever you are, you might as well own up.

““I have told you I will not rest until I know who the culprit is.’

““Mother Nature,’ the great sun began, a little timidly,

““I am afraid I did.

““I did not mean to wake Dandelion or to call him up.

““I did smile upon the little thing.

““I was thinking how pretty he looked in that very same spot last summer.

“ ‘I must have smiled harder and longer than I thought I did.

“ ‘The first I knew, up came Dandelion’s yellow head.

“ ‘I am sorry, Mother Nature.

“ ‘I am very sorry,’ pleaded the sun.

“ Mother Nature scolded no more.

“ But she began at once to cover up poor little Dandelion.

“ She tucked him up to his very chin with soft, warm moss.

“ She even pinned his blanket down securely.

“ She used a long, sharp thorn for a safety pin.

“ All this time, the pines stood straight and tall in the woods.

“The pines had a great time, whispering to one another.

“They thought the sun had played a great joke on Dandelion.

“They laughed and laughed at Dandelion’s thinking it was time to get up.

“People heard them and said:—

“ ‘What a noise the wind makes in the pine trees tonight.

“ ‘I am afraid that means a storm is coming.’ ”

THE VIOLET

The last bell had just rung. Miss Maud was ready to mark the calendar for the day.

It was a very pretty calendar this month.

Dainty apple blossoms were drawn about it.

“Tell us the year, Robert,” said Miss Maud.

“This year is 1911,” answered Robert, promptly.

“And the month, Gladys?”

“This is May,” said Gladys.

“The month of bees and month of flowers.”

“What tells us it is May?”

“We do not need to look at the calendar.”

“The bees and butterflies are dancing in the sun.”

“Good! Another sign?”

“Violets and buttercups are in blossom.”

“True, something else that makes us know it is May?”

“Mr. Bobolink, Mr. Robin, Mr. Bluebird, and their wives are very happy and gay.”

“You are doing well.

“Who can think of still another sign?”

“Ladybugs are taking naps on the fences.

“We make them fly away home.

“Ladybug! Ladybug!

Fly away home.

Your house is on fire.

Your children will burn!”

“Do any other birds besides Robin, Bluebird, and Bobolink, know that May has come?” asked Miss Maud.

“The old black crows always begin their noisy picnics as soon as May is here,” some one answered.

“Suppose we play we are out in the woods.

“We will shut our eyes, so that we cannot see the fresh green things.

“We will put our fingers in our ears, so that we cannot hear the birds’ song of spring.

“Cannot we still tell it is May?”

“Yes,” shouted the children, “because everything smells so sweet.”

“The whole world is like a great big bouquet in May,” said Miss Maud.

“Let us think of all the things May brings.

“The meadow brooks seem to be trying to run away.

“Perhaps they are afraid Jack Frost is chasing them.

“He tied them up so long.

“They may be afraid he will tie them up again if he catches them.

“What has May brought the trees?” asked Miss Maud.

“New bonnets! Pretty green bonnets, too,” some one cried.

“And pretty green gowns to match,” said Marjorie.

“How old is the month of May, Robert?” asked Miss Maud.

“Only one day old, Miss Maud,” Robert answered.

“This is the first of May.

“Moving day and May day!

“Do you know how the children in England keep May day?” Miss Maud asked.

“They have a Maypole and dance about it, I know,” said Margaret.

“My grandma lived in England, when she was a little girl.

“Each child holds in his hand the end of a bright-colored ribbon.

“The other end of the ribbon is fastened to the pole.

“Then, as they dance around the pole, they wind it with the ribbons they hold.”

“There was a May queen, too,” Miss Maud added.

“The children choose some little girl for their queen.

“Then all the children dance about her.

“There were once some children who wished they could have a May-pole.

“They wanted to dance around a May queen, too.

“But they could not have either a Maypole or a May queen.

“So they made beautiful May baskets.

“They filled some baskets with flowers.

“Some were filled with candy.

“Others were filled with fruit.

“Then the children hung the baskets on the doors of houses. They rang the bells, and ran away.

“One of their prettiest baskets was filled with fruit and flowers.

“They hung that one on a lady’s door.

“She had been sick in the hospital for a long time.

“Then they tapped gently and tiptoed away.

“What shall we put in our calendar today, then?” asked Miss Maud.

“A May basket,” said one, “because it is May day.”

“A yellow sun,” said another, “because it is a beautiful day.”

“I have something more to put in the calendar, Miss Maud,” said Robert.

Robert smiled as if he knew something that no one else knew.

“Very well, Robert.

“What more do you wish put in the calendar?”

“Something I found,” said Robert.

He ran up to Miss Maud and put a few violets in her hand.

“Violets, children!” cried Miss Maud, holding them up.

“The dear little things!

“Was anything ever half so sweet?

“Children, do you know how the violets came to be?

“Do you know the place they came from?

“Shall I tell you?

“Would you like to hear the story?”

“Yes! Yes! Miss Maud,” cried the

children, and they sat as still as mice to listen.

“A long time ago,” so the story says, “God cut holes in the beautiful blue sky.

“And why do you suppose God cut these holes in the sky?

“He cut the holes to let the bright stars shine through the holes.

“The stars were set to watch the earth people.

“The stars were to keep count of all the wicked things the earth’ people did.

“The earth people did many, many wicked things.

“So the stars began winking and blinking.

“They did not want to see and count all the wicked things.

“But the violets!

“I am almost forgetting my story.

“God cut these holes in the sky.

“What became of the scraps of blue do you think?

“They fell down to earth, of course, and—

“Ah! You have guessed the rest of my story.



“I see it by your faces.

“Those little blue scraps fell all over the earth.

“Those little blue scraps are our sweet violets.”

THE WAITING BEE

“The winter has been very long and cold,” thought the bee.

“I am so eager for warm days to come.

“I am tired of staying so closely in my hive.

“Warm days will bring back the flowers.

“Then comes the busy time of making honey that I like so well.

“I am so snug and warm in my hive, I can’t tell whether winter is over or not.

“I must venture out of my hive.

“I must see if there are any signs of spring.”

The bee peeped out from his hive.

He saw a snowdrop, blooming all by itself in the garden bed.

The snowdrop looked very small and pale.

But it lifted its hanging head to answer the bee’s question.

“I came to tell the world that March is here,” said the snowdrop, very softly.

“You’ll find that I have honey, too, if you wish some.”

“Thank you,” said the bee, politely.

“But I fear your honey would be icy cold.

“This air is icy cold, for all the day is so bright and sunny.

“I find I am too early, little snow-drop.

“I’ll go back to my hive.

“My hive is the best place for me a little longer.”

The bee was very glad indeed to get back to his warm hive.

There he waited until it seemed to him the warm days must have come.

This time the bee hummed a happy song as he left his hive.

He had spent all the long cold winter in this hive.

“What month is it?” the bee wondered to himself.

“I’ll soon see something that will tell me.

“Ah! Crocuses!

“The grass is thick with the gay little flowers.

“Some are as yellow as gold.

“Others are white as snow.

“Many are blue as the summer skies.

“April is on the way,” the crocuses always come to say.

“April is not warm enough for me to be out of my hive.

“Today is warm and sunny, to be sure.

“But there is no telling what tomorrow will be.

“It is as likely to snow as to shine.

“One never knows what April will do.

“I must try to be patient a little longer.

“It is better to wait awhile before gathering my honey.

“I’d rather wait than be frozen to death.

“It is better to wait than be buried in a snowdrift.”

The bee did not wait so long this time.

Then he ventured out again.

This time he did not have to look about for signs of spring.

He could tell with his eyes shut
that spring had come.

He could smell the sweet violets.

The lilac bushes, too, tossed their
beautiful blossoms.

Lilacs are like gay-colored plumes,
waving in the air.

Daffodil wore a crown of shining
gold.

No king ever wore a brighter
crown than daffodil.

The cherry tree was dressed in a
snow-white gown.

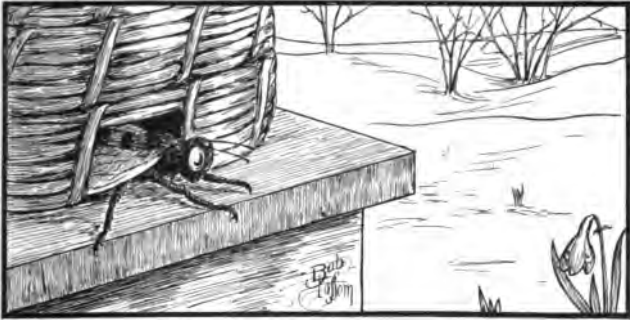
It was beautiful enough for any bride.

The wake robins were the surest
signs of all that it was May.

The bee found the wake robins
down by the brook.

“At last it is May!” hummed the bee.

“May is the month I love best of all the year.”



THE WASP AND THE BEE

The bee was very busy and happy one day.

He was out in the garden, among the gay nasturtiums.

He had not been there very long

when his cousin wasp came flying through the garden.

His cousin wasp stopped to visit with him.

“Little Cousin,” the wasp began, “I know you are always too busy to talk to me.

“But I have been wishing to ask you a question for a long time.”

“Ask it, then,” buzzed the bee.

“But do be quick about it.

“Nasturtiums are not to be found all the year round.”

“I want to know,” said the wasp, as fast as he could talk, “why everybody loves you so much better than me.

“They even build homes for you.

“They knock down the home I build for myself.

“They knock down my home wherever they find it.

“They sing songs about you.

“They teach their children to watch you flying here and there.

“They run when they see me coming.

“Or they drive me away with clubs.

“They would even beat me, I know, if they dared.

“It cannot be because you wear better clothes than I.

“I do not wish to hurt your feelings, cousin.

“But I am sure my coat fits better than yours.

“It cannot be because they think me ugly.

“Where will you see any one who has a better form than I have?

“I do not wish to boast, but I know, without any one’s telling me, that I am slim.

“I am trim. I am graceful.

“And yet, for all this,” sighed the wasp, “there is no one who likes me in all the world.

“It makes me very sad when I think of it.

“Tell me, do you know why people do not like me?”

The wasp stopped to catch his breath.

He looked eagerly at the bee.

The bee had listened carefully to all the wasp said, busy though he was.

“All you say is true, cousin,” answered the bee.

“I can very quickly tell you why people like me and do not like you.

“If I were up to half the wild pranks that you are, people would not like me any better than they do you.

“If I did as much mischief as you do, they would drive me away, too.

“They would beat me, too, I know, if they dared.

“I should expect to be hated if I spent all my time seeing how many people I could make scream with pain.

“I have heard people say that your body is graceful.

“I think your wings are very beautiful.

“I have even heard people call you handsome, while they were dodging away from you.

“My coat is not elegant like yours.

“It is so plain that it is homely.

“I could not be graceful if I tried.

“Short, fat people are not often graceful.”

“Yet no one ever gets angry with you,” said the wasp, crossly.

“You do not even have to build your own house.

“People are glad to do it for you.

“Yes, and why?” asked the bee.

“To store away the honey that I am making for those people to eat.

“All day long I am busy working as hard as I can.

“So that people may have something to eat which they like very much.

“You, cousin wasp, spend all your time trying to give them pain.

“I spend my life in making the honey they like so well.”



THE BATTLE OF THE BEES

This morning there was a boy in our school who did not work.

Miss Maud said : “ George, you are a drone in our busy hive. ”

Then she laughed and told us that the bees who do no work in the hive are called drones.

“ They are lazy fellows, and so was George this morning. I thought drone was a good name for him. ”

Soon it was time for our story.

“ Once upon a time a great many drones got into a hive.

“ The hive was full of sweet, clear honey in the comb.

“ None of the drones had made one

drop of that honey nor one of those combs.

“But the drones all said it was theirs.

“They said the bees who had made it must leave the hive.

“The drones worked for once, trying as hard as they could to drive the bees out of their home.

“The bees were plucky little fellows.

“They could fight as well as work.

“They were not going to give up their own so easily.

“The drones and bees fought for a long time, and neither side had won.

“Then the bees said that they

would go and ask the wasp to decide which one owned the honey, the comb, and the hive.

“The drones were glad to agree to this.

“They had not been able to conquer the bees as easily as they had thought they could.

“Both the drones and the bees flew as fast as their wings could carry them to the wasp.

“The wasp was to be judge.

“The wasp listened to both sides of the story.

“Then he said they had asked him a very hard question.

“He would have to think very carefully before he answered it.

“The wasp thought and thought for a long while.

“Then he told both the drones and the bees to make some comb right there before his eyes, and fill it with honey.

“Then perhaps he would be able to tell which comb was most like the one in the hive.

“The bees said that was very fair.

“They went at once to work, making the comb the wasp asked for.

“Now, the drones are never willing to work.

“They said that was not a fair thing to ask and they would not do it.

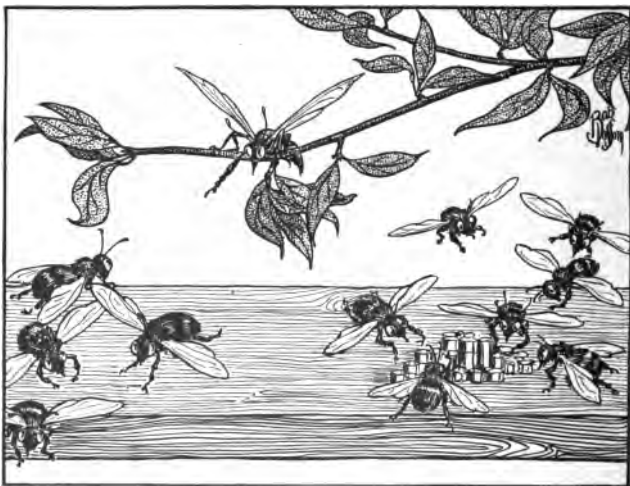
“They would make neither comb nor honey for Judge Wasp.

“‘Ha! Ha!’ laughed the wasp.

“ ‘Now, it is very easy to tell who made the honey in the hive. It was never you, you lazy fellows,’ he said to the drones.

“ ‘The comb, and the honey in it, belong to these busy little workers.

“ ‘You shall not take it from them.’ ”



THE BEE STING

“ One day I was in the garden and a bee stung the end of my thumb.

“ Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! How it pained !

“ I ran screaming into the house, which frightened mother very badly.

“ I could hardly stop screaming long enough to tell her what was the matter.

“ I could not stand still long enough to see what was the matter.

“ I danced all about the room in my great pain.

“ As soon as Grandpa knew what had hurt me, he got some soft mud from the garden.

“ He put it on my thumb.

“ It cooled my poor, burning thumb at once.

“It was not long before it took the pain out, too.

“Then, very soon, as the pain was better, Grandpa said: —

“‘I shall have to tell you how so small a thing as a bee can hurt so cruelly.’

“I am always glad to hear one of Grandpa’s stories.

“I curled up in the big, easy chair to listen.”

“A long, long time ago,” Grandpa began, “a bee gave a pot of her sweetest, clearest honey to Jupiter.

“Jupiter was the king of the heavens.

“He lived far up above the clouds.

“Jupiter was much pleased with the gift from the little bee.

“She had given him the best of all she had.

“She had worked busily for many a day to make it for him, too.

“Jupiter wished to do something nice for her.

“He wished to show her in some way how pleased he was.

“He wondered what he could do for her.

“At last the great Jupiter said: ‘Little bee, you may make any one wish you please.

“‘Whatever you wish shall be yours.’

“The little bee did not wait a moment to think what wish to make.

“She said, ‘O king, I wish that every one I sting may die.’

“Jupiter could hardly believe his ears.

“He had not guessed that the little creature was so spiteful and ill-natured.

“He was surprised that her one wish was to hurt the earth people.

“It troubled Jupiter that she was not the kindly, happy, little creature he had supposed she was.

“To be sure, he had given the little bee his promise.

“His promise could not be broken.

“But Jupiter did not mean to let her hurt the poor earth people as much as that.

“He must do what he could to

protect them from the bee and her wicked wish.

“So Jupiter said: ‘Little bee, I have given my word.

“ ‘You shall have your wish.

“ ‘You will be able to hurt the earth people.

“ ‘But none shall die from your sting.’

“The bee looked very happy for a moment.

“Then Jupiter said, ‘But, be very careful how you use that sting.

“ ‘Wherever you plant your sting, there you must leave it.’

“The little bee looked very sober.

“That meant she could sting but one person.

“She had meant to hurt so many.

“She looked still more sober the next moment.

“For Jupiter said, ‘And with your sting, you will lose your life, also.’

“Is the pain better?” asked Grandfather, as he finished his story.

But Marjorie had not heard the end of the story.

She was fast asleep in the big, easy chair.



THE STORY OF AMY STEWART

There once lived a little girl named Amy Stewart.

She played out in the garden among the flowers all day long.

Sometimes she wandered away to the woods where the birds sang to her.

The birds sing more sweetly in the woods than in the city.

Amy was quite a big girl, but she had never done anything but play.

She did not know what it was to work.

One day, Amy's mother told her that she was too old now to spend all her time in play.

She was quite old enough to learn to work a little every day.



Amy did not care about learning to work.

She begged her mother to let her play in the garden a little while.

Then she would begin her first lesson in work.

Her mother was too busy just then to get any work ready for her.

So she said "Yes," and Amy was off as fast as her feet could carry her.

The first thing Amy saw, when she reached the garden, was a gray squirrel.

"O dear!" Amy sighed to the squirrel. "How I wish I were you!"

"Why do you wish that?" chattered the squirrel; "so that you could live in a hole in a tree?"

“So I’d never have to learn to work,” Amy answered.

“You have nothing to do all the day long, but eat and sleep and play. Mother says I must learn to work at once.”

The squirrel chattered so fast and so loud that Amy thought he must be angry with her.

“There are very few people who work harder than I do,” he said.

“I have to keep busy from morning till night.

“I store away enough nuts to last my big family all through the long, cold winter.”

“I suppose you do,” said Amy; “I never thought of it before.”

Just then a bee flew by on his way to a red rose that grew in the garden.

“Do you have to work, too, Mr. Bee?” Amy asked.

“I have no time for anything else,” answered the busy fellow.

“My playtime never comes. Who, but me, makes all the honey you eat?”

“You like my honey very much with hot biscuits for your tea.

“Did you never learn the song that is written about me?” asked the bee, proudly.

“In this song, I am called the busy bee.”

“Oh, yes, indeed, I have. Grandpa has read it to me many times,” Amy answered.

Away flew the bee to another flower.

Amy turned to watch a little black ant next.

The little creature was crawling along very slowly.

He was trying to drag a crumb of bread after him.

The crumb of bread was as large as himself.

“That is much too heavy a load for you,” cried Amy.

“Let it alone and come play with me,” she coaxed.

“The bread is pretty heavy for me,” said the ant.

“I am too tired to play with you.

“But I’ll tell you a story, while I rest a bit.

“Oh, do,” cried Amy; “that will be more fun than anything we could play.”

“Once upon a time,” the little ant began, “a man was walking along.

“This man did not see where he stepped and did not think, either.

“So he stepped upon the nice home where my brothers and I lived.

“Our home was destroyed, so we could not live in it again.

“People’s homes are destroyed by fire and earthquake sometimes.

“That man’s stepping on our home was as bad for us as fire or earthquake would be for you.

“My brothers did not waste a moment, crying over our lost home.

“They began building another home at once.

“I was too lazy to do my part.

“It seemed a great deal of work to me.

“So I coaxed my brothers to try and find a home, all ready built.

“We traveled many a day and many a mile.

“We searched far and near for a home.

“We wanted one ready for us to step into.

“But we found none.

“After we had traveled a long way, we grew very tired.

“So we gave it up and built a home for ourselves.

“From that day to this, I have always been ready to do my share of the work.

“Our long journey taught us a lesson that we shall never forget as long as we live.

“Now, my story is finished and I am rested,” said the ant. “I must get this bread home before the sun sets.”

Amy was left alone again.

She still sat where the ant had left her.

She was thinking of all that the bee, the squirrel, and the ant had told her.

She supposed animals and insects did have to work.

But, surely, no one ever heard of the flowers doing any work.

Her eyes fell upon a beautiful bright red poppy near her.

“You don’t have to work, do you, Poppy?” she asked it.

“What an idea, little girl!” said the poppy.

“There are very few who are busier than we flowers.”

Amy looked very much surprised.

“What work can there be that you must do?” Amy asked after a little.

“Oh, all the sunbeams have to be caught, if we are going to grow,” answered the poppy.

“Then the roots must draw water from the earth.

“The stem has to carry the water to the leaves and blossoms.

“Our busiest time of all is when the seed boxes must be filled.

“The seed boxes must be filled, so that there may be flowers in the gardens next year.”

Amy sat still for a long time, thinking over all she had learned.

She had learned a lesson first from the squirrel.

Then the bee and the ant had taught her something.

Now she had learned another lesson from the beautiful red poppy.

After a while Amy went slowly into the house.

She asked her mother for something to do at once.

Amy's mother looked surprised, but very much pleased.

"What made my little daughter think she wanted to work?" asked Mother.

"I have been talking with a squirrel, a bee, an ant, and a red poppy," answered Amy.

"Every one of them was as busy as he could be.

"I seemed to be the only one in the garden who did not have something to do.

"So give me some work, Mother, dear.

"I am going to work with the rest of the world."

Her mother smiled.

“That’s right, daughter.

“Then when your playtime comes, you will enjoy it more than ever before.

“Here is a new towel for you to hem.”

Amysang as she sewed, and her busy needle kept time with her happy song.

KING SOLOMON AND THE BEES

Long, long ago there lived a great king.

This great king was called Solomon.

No one had as much gold as Solomon in all the country round.

No one knew as much as Solomon in all the country round.

He was called the Wise King.

No one was able to think of a question so hard that Solomon could not answer it.

He had only to look at a tree or a flower to tell you its name.

He knew all the insects and other animals by their names.

A queen lived not far from Solomon's country.

This queen, of a country called Sheba, was noted for her beauty as Solomon was for his wisdom.

She had heard many times how much more Solomon knew than any one else.

She wished very much to find out if all she heard were true.

How could she test the Wise King ?

At last she thought of a way.

She went out into the fields and picked a bunch of pink clovers.

She gathered their green leaves, too.

Then she had made in wax a bunch of pink clovers and green leaves exactly like the real flowers.

The wax leaves and clovers were made very perfectly.

She herself could not tell, without touching them, which were the real clovers and which were the wax ones.

She showed Solomon her clovers as soon as she reached his palace.

She asked him to tell which had grown in the field and which had been made of wax.

He was not to touch them or smell them.

Solomon stood still and looked at the clovers.

He looked at them a long time without saying a word.

The queen began to think that at last she had found something so hard that even the Wise King could not answer it.

Just then a bee flew past the window.

King Solomon sprang to the window.

He opened it so that the bee could come in. Who would know so well as a bee ?

The bee would know in which clovers honey was to be found.



King Solomon smiled at the beautiful queen.

The bee flew at once to the real clovers.

The bee was after the honey he knew he would find there.

The bee answered the hard question for Solomon.

THE CHICKENS

I

Grandma came into my room one morning before I was up.

She was holding something so carefully in her apron.

I wondered what it could be.

Grandma came up to the bed and let me peek.

There were six tiny, fluffy, black balls in her apron.

I soon saw that they were chickens.

The poor little things had been out of their shells only half an hour.

They were shivering with cold, though the day was warm.

Grandma had to take them away from their mother.

Their mother was so very lame, she would be sure to step on the wee things.

She had always been a queer-acting old hen.

Grandpa said he thought she was crazy, as people are sometimes.

How do you suppose grandma kept those shivering little things warm?

She lined a clean basket with a soft flannel sheet.

But even that would not keep such tiny young chicks warm enough.

So grandma put the hot water bag under the flannel sheet.

The poor little motherless things huddled close together on the hot water bag.

Then grandma spread the sheet over them besides.

Wasn't that a funny mother? A hot water bag and a flannel sheet?

I think the little chicks would rather have a mother who could call them when danger was near.

They'd like better a mother who could cover them with her wings.

Little chicks who do not mind their mothers often get into trouble, just as children do.

Once a chicken saw a mother duck and her ducklings.

They were having such a good time in the water.

Little Chick asked the old mother hen to let her play with them.

When her mother would not let her go, she began to fret and cry.

She didn't see why she couldn't splash and swim about if ducks could.

Ducks were no bigger nor better than she.

The old mother hen told her to stop her foolish talking.

“Look at your feet!” said old mother hen.

“They are good for scratching and good for walking.

“But they are not at all the kind of feet for swimming.”

Chicky stayed by the edge of the pond watching the ducks.

She sulked and pouted because she could not go to play with them.

She wondered if her mother knew what kind of feet one had to have for swimming.

Perhaps her mother was not telling her the truth.

Perhaps she just told her that because she did not wish her to play with the ducks.



The old mother hen was busy scratching.

She did not hear the little chick mutter, "I know I can swim. I know I shall not get drowned.

"I'll just show mother I know better than to believe what she told me."

The first thing the old mother hen heard was a splash!

Poor Chicky had jumped into the pond.

She called to her mother to save her, but she went under before any one could get her.

Chickens and children had better always listen to their mothers if they want to keep out of trouble.

Children and chickens who do not mind their mothers nearly always come to grief.

One afternoon I was sitting on the porch.

A plump little robin flew down on the grass.

He was hunting a worm for dinner.

Soon his bright eyes spied a nice fat one.

Just then a little chicken came by.

Both the robin and the chicken stood still and looked at each other.

They seemed to think they had never seen a more wonderful sight.

The chicken spoke first, and I did not think what he said was very polite.

“What a queer-looking chicken you are!

“You are not at all like my brothers and sisters.

“You are not like any chick I ever saw before in all my life.

“Your wings are so very long.

“I declare, your wings are almost as long as your tail.

“Your body is fat as butter.”

The robin was so surprised that all he could say was :—

“Dear me! Dear me! I never saw so strange-looking a bird as you.

“Do tell me, can you sing?” asked the robin, as they stood staring at each other.

“Let’s hear you sing!”

“I can’t sing at all,” said Chicky, with a toss of his head.

“But I can cluck and peep.

“I’m very sure you can’t do that.”

“Who wants to cluck or peep?” said Robin, with a saucy flirt of his tail.

Chicky found his way back to the hen yard.

He told them all that he had met the queerest-looking chicken, who knew nothing at all.

Robin hurried off to his nest in the cherry tree.

He told his mate he had seen the strangest-looking bird, and it didn’t know a thing.

II

Hark ! Hear that rooster crowing his loud "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

It makes me think of a story Miss Maud told us.

Perhaps you'd like to hear it, too.

A long time ago, there lived a handsome young god.

This handsome young god was called Mars.

He lived way up above the clouds.

Mars was the god of War.

He had a servant called Alectryon.

He had always had Alectryon for his servant, and was sure that he was faithful to him.

Mars had a secret that he wished no one to know.

It was Alectryon's business to tell Mars if he saw any one coming.

Alectryon had another thing to do every morning.

That was to call Mars before the sun was up.

Mars told Alectryon never to forget to wake him before it was daylight.

One night poor Alectryon had worked so hard, he was very tired.

He slept so soundly he never woke until the sun was in the sky.

The first thing Alectryon knew, Mars was shaking him roughly.

He was scolding poor Alectryon in the crossdest voice.

Poor Alectryon jumped to his feet and stood before his angry master.

He did not know what to say.

Alectryon stood there trembling.

All at once, feathers came out all over his body.

His arms became wings.

He looked down at his feet.

They were changing into long, sharp claws.

He was so frightened that he threw up his head and shouted for help.

All he could say was "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

From that day to this, Alectryon has never forgotten to tell us the sun will soon be up.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo" is the only way he can tell us.

Now, when you hear the roosters.

bright and early in the morning you will think of poor Alectryon.

Poor Alectryon was changed into the first rooster by his angry master.



THE GRASSHOPPER

We had the queerest new pupil at school to-day, and he came in the strangest way.

He came under the skirt of Miss Helen's thin white dress.

Now you have guessed the new pupil's name, I know.

We caught the grasshopper in a glass bottle and watched him for a long time.

Nurse told me the grasshopper was cobbler for the fairies and made all their shoes.

She said his shop was up in the old oak tree.

Fairy feet are too tender for the stiff, heavy leather we wear.

This funny little cobbler makes all his shoes of leaves.

He pastes them with dew.

He never sews them as our shoe-makers do.

Nurse says he is paid for his work in golden buttercup leaves.

Besides this he is given raindrops to drink.

This is not all he gets for his shoes.

The fairies bring him sacks of pollen flour that they have shaken from the dandelions.

The busy ants think the grasshoppers lazy, because they dance and sing all summer and store away no food for winter.

One winter the grasshoppers were so cold and hungry they had to beg some food from the ants.

The ants gave them food, but made the grasshoppers promise to work a little next summer.

I wonder if they did, don't you? The grasshopper was once a tall, handsome young man. His name was Tithonus. He loved the sunlight and the songs of birds.

One day he was told to wish for whatever he wanted most.

Tithonus asked that he might live forever, but forgot to ask that he might always be young.

By and by his hair grew gray and fell off.

His plump red cheeks grew withered and brown.

His body grew smaller and smaller.

His voice changed to a shrill little pipe.

You can hear it all day long in the fields.

This is why some people call the grasshopper, "The Old Man of the Meadows."

THE BIRDS

When grown-up people sing they often have music to look at.

The music tells them what notes to sing.

How do you suppose the birds know what songs to sing?

Mother says she thinks God must teach the birds to sing.

They know much sweeter songs than people can ever learn.

The birds' music must be written on the leaves of the trees.

Perhaps the leaves are covered with

the notes of all the sweet songs the birds sing. Who knows?

My sister Helen takes singing lessons twice a week.

Her teacher is in a big building down town.

There are many music teachers in the same building.

But I think all the birds must have the same music teacher.

The birds' music teacher must be Professor Wind.

When we see the leaves moving it may be Professor Wind turning the music for his class.

He does it for them so they need not stop singing to do it.

Professor Wind and the birds teach

the little brooks all the pretty songs they learn.

Then they can sing them together.

At last the summer is over and winter has begun.

Then Professor Wind takes his choir of birds and all their music away.

He goes to give more concerts in the South where the days are not so cold.

THE ROBIN

I

Suppose the Robins had newspapers.

In March we would read that "Mr. and Mrs. Redbreast have returned from the South.

“They will be at home for the summer in the old apple tree.”

Then, in October, we would read again that “Mr. and Mrs. Redbreast have left for the South.

“They will spend the winter there.”

There was once a Mr. and Mrs. Redbreast who stayed with us all through the long, cold winter.

They had built a nest for several summers in one of Grandpa’s apple trees.

That spring they came as usual.

Mr. Redbreast was soon flying busily back and forth.

He brought whatever Mrs. Redbreast needed for the nest.

Soon after they had gone to house-keeping, our old gray pussy caught Mrs. Redbreast.

Pussy would have made a dinner of her, if Mother had not seen her.

She saw it just in time to save Mrs. Redbreast.

Mother took Mrs. Redbreast away from pussy's sharp teeth and cruel claws.

Mother did it as quickly as she could.

But one of Mrs. Redbreast's wings was broken.

My brother climbed up in the apple tree, and put Mrs. Redbreast safely back into the nest.

Mr. Redbreast took good care of his little wife.

He brought her the best of everything he could find to eat.

But it was a long time before she was able to fly at all.

All summer Mrs. Redbreast could fly only a few feet at a time.

She could not use the wing pussy had broken.

The days grew cold, and the other robins began to talk of going South.

Some robins had already started on their journey.

They stopped for Mr. and Mrs. Redbreast to go with them.

But Mr. and Mrs. Redbreast did

not go with them, nor with any of their other friends.

We felt sure that the reason they did not go South with the other robins was because Mrs. Redbreast could not fly.

Mr. Redbreast, like a good husband, would not leave his little wife.

But we wondered what the poor little couple would do.

One day we saw Mr. Redbreast flying busily here and there.

He was as busy as he had been in the spring.

He brought his wife the same things he brought her when they were building the nest.

We wondered if they were going to build another nest.

We soon saw that was not it.

Mrs. Redbreast wove a kind of roof over the nest.

No wind nor rain nor snow could come in.

Now we saw what it all meant.

They had to stay here, where it was so cold.

So they knew they must make their nest as snug and warm as they knew how.

Grandpa said such brave little birds must not suffer.

So he had a large, wooden bird-house built.

Then Grandpa had their nest put in it.

Grandpa knew that twigs and hay and horse hair would never keep out the cold north wind.

He was afraid the robins would freeze to death, if they stayed in their nest.

I think they would have starved to death, too, if it had not been for Grandpa.

No worms or insects that robins eat were to be found in winter.

Grandpa, or some of us, saw that they had plenty to eat every day.

When spring came again, the other robins came back from the South.

They found Mr. Redbreast and his little wife, who couldn't fly, alive and well.

Mr. Redbreast and his wife were glad to see their friends again, and bade them welcome.

II

One day, in June, a robin tried to see how high he could fly.

He went so far that he was very tired.

So he flew down into a field to rest.

There were many flowers in the field, and among them was a buttercup.

The buttercup grew very near where Robin rested.

She was hanging her head and looking so sad.

Robin asked her what was the trouble.

The buttercup drew a long sigh.



Then she told Robin she was feeling very sad indeed.

She wanted so very much to be a daisy.

“Daisies are pretty, to be sure,” said Robin; “but so are you.”

“Why should you want to be a daisy instead of what you are?”

“Oh, daisies are so tall and straight,” sighed buttercup.

“And then, I have always wanted to wear a ruche around my neck as daisies do.

“I do think ruches are so stylish, and I know one would become me.”

“Is that all the reason you wish to change?” Robin laughed. “Just to have a frill around your neck?”

“No, there is another reason,” and buttercup pouted.

“I am so tired of this same yellow dress I always have to wear.

“I don’t like a dress all one color.

“If I were only a daisy I could have a gown of white and gold.”

“The yellow in the daisy’s dress is not as bright and pretty as the yellow in yours,” said Robin.

He was trying to comfort her.

“That is so,” buttercup agreed.

“My own gown would look very well, perhaps, if I only had a nice, white ruche to wear with it.

“Some day, when you are out flying, Robin, do try and find me one, will you?” Buttercup coaxed.

“Then perhaps I’ll look almost like a daisy.”

“Indeed I’ll not,” said Robin.

“I think you are the silliest flower I ever knew.

“You must be crazy to think you can dress yourself up to look like some flower you are not.

“I am a robin, and I always want to be a robin.

“I’d rather be myself than the proudest eagle that ever lived on a high mountain.

“I’d rather be myself than the swiftest swallow who leaves me far behind every time we try a race.

“You are as pretty as any flower, when you don’t spoil your bright face by frowning and pouting and crying.

“The children gather you as much as they do the daisies.

“They find you in the fields together and they all love you.

“Hold up your head, little Buttercup.

“Give me one of your bright smiles before I go,” chirped Robin cheerily, as he flew away.

III

An Indian boy cannot go out to fight until he shows that he is strong.

An Indian boy cannot go hunting, until he shows that he is strong enough to be a brave.

Then he can go fighting and hunting with the men of his tribe.

This is the way the Indian boys show that they are able to be warriors like the men of the tribe.

The boy's father sends him out into the forest, alone, as soon as he is old enough.

He is to stay there by himself for twelve long days and twelve dark nights.

The poor little Indian boy can have nothing to eat nor drink all those twelve days.

His father takes him home when the twelve days are over.

Then they have a great feast with music and dancing.

Once there was a little Indian boy, who did not want to go into the forest.

He was old enough to be a brave, too.

He did not wish to be a warrior.

He knew he would never like to shoot birds and animals.

But his father made him go.

His father said even the squaws and papooses would laugh at him.

They would cry, "shame" upon him.

The father visited his boy every day while he was in the forest.

The tenth day the father felt very sad.

He found his son very weak and sick.

The poor boy could not even stand upon his feet.

The sick boy begged to be taken home.

It was very hard for the father to say, "No," for he loved his son.

But he wished his son to be a warrior like himself.

He could never be a warrior, if he took him home before the twelve days were over.

So the father begged his boy to be patient just a little longer.

Only two days more now and he might come home.

The father came again the next day.

The boy was too sick now even to beg to be taken home.

He could not even raise his head from the hard ground, where he lay.

It made the poor father's heart ache to leave his little sick son there, even one more day.

But he went away.

He promised the poor little fellow that next time he might go home with him.

The next day, as soon as the sun was up, the father came.

He brought food for his starving boy.

But there was no boy to be found.

"My son! My son!" called the father.

"Where are you?"

Had he wandered in the woods and lost his way?

No, that could not be.

He was not able even to stand.
Had wild animals killed and eaten
him ?

Could some evil spirit have stolen
him away ?

This last thought made the father
very angry.

He raised his bow and arrow as
if to shoot.

Just then a beautiful bird came
very near the Indian warrior.

Its feathers were of the color of
the earth.

Its breast was red as the sky at
sunset.

“Don’t be angry, father,” the bird
said.

“No evil spirit has stolen me.

“A good spirit came, while I lay so sick that day.

“The good spirit changed me into the beautiful bird you see.

“Hark! What a sweet cheery voice I have.

“Don't be sorry for me, father.

“Don't feel sad about me any more.

“I am happier than I ever would have been as an Indian brave.

“When you go home, tell the Indian children about me.

“Ask them not to shoot me, for I love them all.

“I want to build my nest near their homes, if they will let me.

“I want to fly in and out among them.”

The Indians, who were invited to the feast, saw the father coming home alone.

They asked him where he had left his son.

The father told them a good spirit had changed his son into a beautiful bird.

The bird had a sweet cheery voice.

But no one believed his story.

Just then they saw a beautiful, brown bird.

It had a breast like the sunset sky.

The bird perched on the father's wigwam.

The Indians saw then that the warrior's story was true.

This bird was not like any bird they had ever seen before.

“Cheerily, Cheerily, Cheer-up, Cheeree,” it sang from the topmost pole of the father’s wigwam.

IV

Longer ago than you can think, this earth was very cold.

There was but one fire in all the Northland.

You may be sure this one fire was very precious to the people.

It was watched night and day for fear it would go out.

An old man and his son did nothing else but tend this fire.

They took turns so that each one could have some time to sleep.

In the North, where this one fire was, there lived a great white bear.

This white bear loved the cold.

He wished that the days were still colder.

He hated the people for keeping this one fire.

He watched all the time for a chance to put out the fire.

But he could never catch both the old man and his son asleep at the same time.

The white bear tried every way he could to put out the fire.

But the old man and his son were always on guard.



The bear thought if he could only put out that one fire, it would be too cold for the people to live there.

Then he would have all the Northland for himself.

One night it was the old man's turn to sleep and the boy's turn to tend the fire.

As the boy sat by the fire that night, he grew very sleepy.

He wished it were his turn to rest instead of the old man's.

Little by little, the boy grew drowsier and drowsier.

At last he forgot all about the precious fire he was to watch.

He fell fast asleep!

The white bear was watching his chance, you may be sure.

No sooner was the boy asleep, than he crept out of his den.

He trampled out the precious fire.

The bear thought he hadn't left so much as a spark.

But there were a few sparks that his ugly little eyes did not see.

There was some one watching, who had brighter eyes than the bear.

This some one did not hate the people or the fire.

This some one was a robin.

He flew down to the few sparks that were left, as soon as the bear was out of sight.

The sparks were not bright enough to blaze up without fanning.

Robin used his wings for a fan and soon had a good fire again.

Robin had to go very near the sparks while he fanned them.

By the time the fire was burning brightly, his breast was as red as the glowing coals.

Poor Robin flew swiftly through the air to cool his burning breast.

Wherever he rested for a moment, a bright fire sprang up.

Soon the whole Northland was lighted up with many fires.

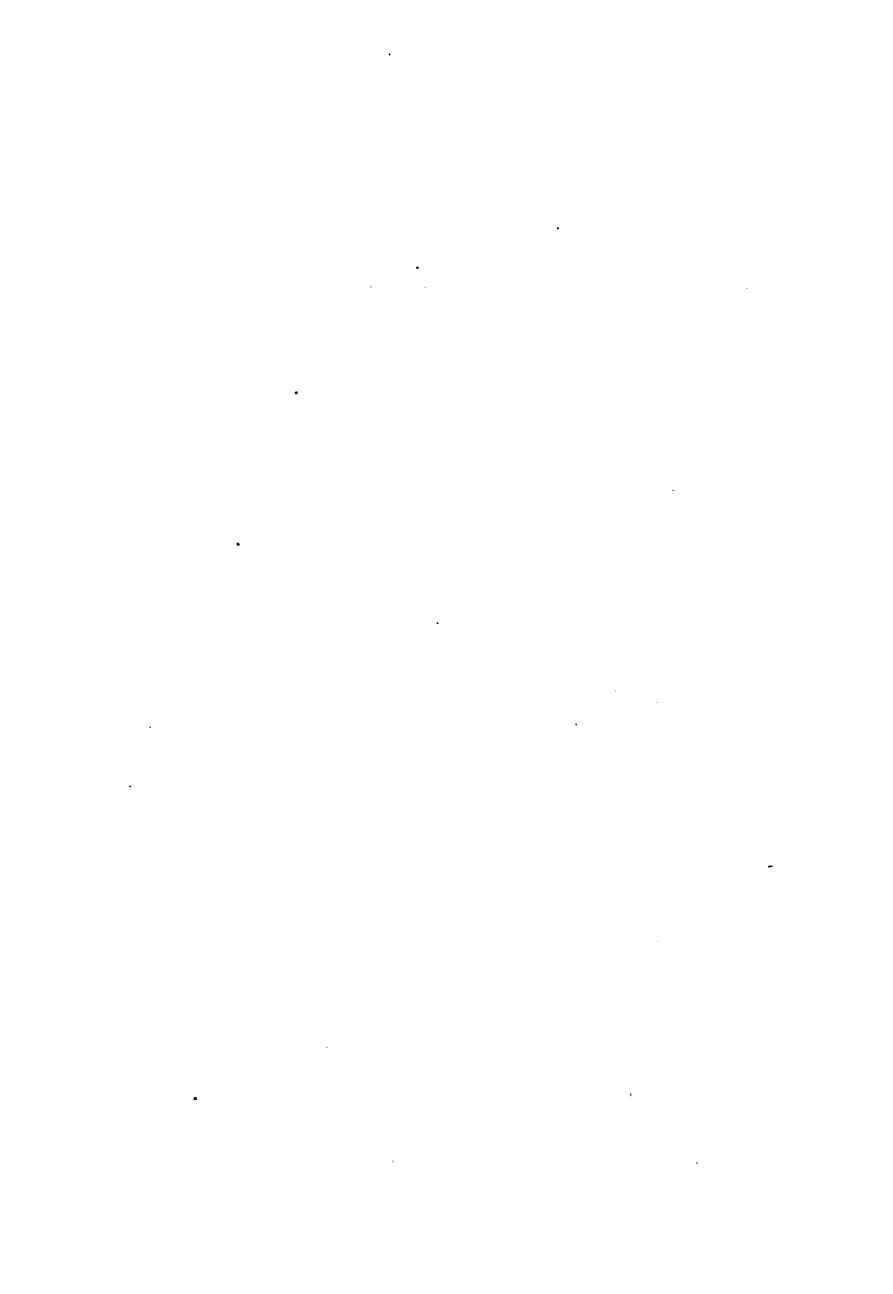
All these new fires had caught from Robin's breast.

The white bear crept back into his

den, when he saw that the people had many fires now instead of one.

From that day to this, robins have had red breasts, as red as glowing coals.





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